



CRISIS MANAGEMENT AT THE CLUB

Sorry to say I, for one, am not feeling very 'summery' at present. The club is in some difficulty on its management and administration side (a fact of which most of you will, I hope, be unaware - apart, that is, from those unfortunate enough to be subjected to my persistent bellyaching).

At last year's AGM, we found ourselves without a Commodore, Fishing Captain or Newsletter Editor. Within weeks Chris Cardwell had stepped up to become our Fishing Captain, and Chris Matthews and I together took the job of producing the newsletter. We are still without a Commodore – a situation that may be unprecedented in the Club's history.

As the Club grows, and running it becomes more complex, we rely more heavily on support services to process information and back up the Club's officers. A few months ago our membership secretary resigned. There was no time to seek and train a replacement, so Hugh took on the posting of membership packs while Cameron, our book-keeper, kindly offered to do the processing and printing of material for despatch.

Now Cameron is leaving, so we desperately need one or two people, who can operate a computer to input data to our bookkeeping and membership systems and mail the membership cards etc. It's not complicated, full instruction will be given, technical support will always be at hand, and it's only a few hours a week. All supplies will be provided, and the Club will pay an hourly rate. So come on and help your club keep moving forward. Email clubsec@varneboatclub.co.uk or phone me on 01797 361576 for more details.

Back in the day, everything was done by committee members, and hats off to them for that. Nowadays though, we have some who live very far away, and some who live very busy lives outside the club and have only limited time to spend on routine administration. So it

follows that we need support staff who won't have committee responsibilities, but nonetheless will be making a vital contribution to the Club's wellbeing.

By the way, I announced my own retirement several months ago and nobody has volunteered to take my place. My departure in four months' time is non-negotiable, so I hope that my present duties don't go begging for too long.

STOP PRESS ANOTHER THEFT!!

Several weeks ago, the tea urn was taken from the kitchen (yes really!). At first we assumed someone had borrowed it for a party at home, but as time has gone by, we realise that it's not coming back. At about £160 for a replacement, that's more cash that could have gone towards keeping membership fees down.

Whatever little faith in human decency I may have once had, has now been further eroded.

**Terry Carter: Hon. Secretary, Social Club Treasurer
Newsletter Editor Laundry taken in!!**

CLOSURE OF LAUNCHING RAMP AND CAR PARK ON 7TH AUGUST

The Joint Emergency Services Day in support of the RNLI will be taking over the grounds of the Club on Saturday 7th August. Consequently, there will be no access to the ramp, compound, or car park for vehicles and trailers.

Alternative free parking is being arranged by the RNLI for those visiting the show or the Club.

The Club bar will be open for members and their guests, and burgers will be on sale from the barbecue.

THE BALCONY EXTENSION AND CLUB FINANCES

thought this would be a good opportunity to advise members of the current situation regarding the balcony extension.

We originally decided to have a "wrap-around" extension, and undertook several stages of preparatory work which included obtaining planning permission and having structural engineer's drawings prepared, so we could cost the project. Roy Pearce, a longstanding member who has carried out extensive steelwork for us in the past, including the clubhouse and the launching ramp, obtained a costing for us which was in the region of £40,000. Over 50% of this sum was for ground- and timber-works and, while it was accepted that savings could be made, we were still looking at a figure of about £35,000. The Directors agreed unanimously that the Club could not afford such a sum at this time of economic uncertainty.

The balcony as it stands is in urgent need of refurbishment, the steelwork on the seaward side of the clubhouse requires repairing, and the facade on that side of the clubhouse looks very tatty and also needs attention. The Directors have agreed that a revised plan should now be considered. Whilst steel fabricators are on site to carry out repairs, it is proposed to extend the existing balcony by about 2 metres to give an area large enough to put out tables and chairs in summer, whilst not affecting the boat washdown area.

We will meet shortly with our architect and a steel fabricator to examine the existing balcony and steelwork, and get an estimate for that work plus the extension.

Repairs to the steelwork and balcony have to be done anyway, and I believe the extension could be done at modest additional cost. It is not an ideal solution, but we don't live in an ideal world.

We have spent a lot of money on the clubhouse over the last few years: the Club has been completely rewired, a new heating system has been installed, a cold store has been built, the bar has been rebuilt, we have replaced the roof, replaced all the upstairs windows, and once we have completed the work to the front of the building there should be little more capital expenditure required. If the Club continues to move forward and we make the surpluses we have made over the last 5 years, we can attend to improving the décor and furnishings, but first we must ensure that the clubhouse is structurally sound.

On matters of financing, membership income is marginally down on the same period last year, but our bar sales are well up. Many thanks to Sue and her team, who work so hard to provide a warm and welcoming environment for members and their guests, while also trying to maximise our income from the bar, which enables us to continue taking the Club forward.

At present we have about £22,000 in the bank but, as I said earlier, we are in uncertain times and your Directors would be very reluctant to get the Club into substantial debt. So, in the words of our former leader, we must be "prudent". (Although I'm far from sure just how prudent he actually was).

Hugh Bagshaw: Hon. Treasurer.

FISHING NEWS

Hi there Fishing Friends, We have had a good proportion of 'fishable' days in the past few months, I hope you all had an opportunity to get out and find that elusive big one! There has been quite a few respectable fish landed, even though over the past few weeks it seemed to have slowed down a bit. We've have had a good run of spring Pollack, some very nice Bass, and up to May the good old Cod were a frequent visitor. Only recently boats started to find good size flatties, and it won't be long before the bream will pay us their usual summer visit. It can be hit and miss sometimes, but well worth the effort! Better late than never, we have finally managed to put together a match calendar for the rest of the year. The first event we have had five boats taking part despite a certain England v Germany match and the Dymchurch open being fished the same day!

I hope on the next match a lot more of you will be able to join in to support our section and have a fun day. Below you'll find a calendar with the rest of the dates.

Please follow our forum (www.vbcforum.co.uk/forum) for the latest news and information. See you soon on the beach, **Best wishes Zal (07903 700623)**

Date	HW	Tide	Book In By	Launch	Time Ashore By	Fixture Name
27 June	12:26	7.3m	09:30	10:00	15:30	
11 July	11:10	7.3m	08:00	08:30	14:00	
25 July	11:34	7.0m	07:30	08:30	14:30	RNLI Open
08 Aug	10:08	6.9m	06:00	07:00	13:00	RNLI Open Reserve
22 Aug	10:37	6.8m	07:30	08:00	13:30	
26 Sep	13:07	7.4m	10:00	11:30	16:00	
24 Oct	12:09	7.4m	08:30	09:00	15:00	
07 Nov	11:08	8.1m	08:00	08:30	14:00	
05 Dec	10:10	7.6m	07:00	07:30	13:00	

John Ruffhead has now become Fishing Captain...thanks to Chris Cardwell for all your hard work.

SOCIAL EVENTS APRIL-JUNE

40'S NIGHT 17TH APRIL

The 83 tickets (limited by fire regulations) sold out in 2 weeks and several disappointed members put their names on a list for cancellations.

The Clover Sisters went down a storm, the other stars of the show being those members who took the trouble to get into period costume: army, navy, airforce were all represented, as well as Dad's Army and a pair of very large "child evacuees", while several ladies not in uniform were in full forties style with dresses, hairstyles and seamed stockings. At least I like to think they were proper stockings, held up by suspenders (quick, change the subject). Prizes were dished out for the most original outfits. Sausage and onion rolls were on sale from the kitchen. Everyone joined in the singalong towards the end, and a great time was had by all. *"We'll meet again, Don't know where, Don't know when....."*

RACE NIGHT 8TH MAY

There has been only two video horse-racing nights at the Club before, and they was so long ago that hardly anyone remembers.

On this occasion about 35-40 members turned out, and before long the queue at the bookie's was getting quite long. As usual, a few lucky punters came out ahead, but everyone enjoyed a real fun evening.

JAZZ NIGHT 5TH JUNE

As is normal in England, when this event was advertised a number of people said "I don't like jazz" without really knowing what they were going to hear. So we changed the poster to read "Jazz and Easy Listening" and sent our pressgang out to recruit the reluctant ones.

In the end, we had an audience of 60 listening to the Pete Abbot Sound with their great vocalist, and enjoying a full home-made buffet in the interval, all for a fiver.

We have seldom, if ever, had so many expressions of appreciation for what was a brilliant social evening. The Pete Abbot Sound will be back in August with an evening of 60's and 70's music. Those who "don't like jazz" please form an orderly queue.....

CAMRA BEER FESTIVAL 12TH JUNE
Eighteen hardy souls (the usual suspects) turned out for this junket, held for the second time at the Kent & East Sussex Steam Railway station in Tenterden.

Having secured our camp in a secluded grassy place (the children's play area) we set about attempting to sample all 55 ales and 15 or so ciders and perries on offer. Needless to say, we didn't succeed. It just felt like it the following day.

A variety of good live music was being played all day, and junk food of the highest quality was available. There was also a steam train every 45 minutes to Bodiam, which of course included a buffet car dispensing ales etc. A great day out, I seem to remember.....

Events organised by John Langton

Lyrics: Terry Carter



PLANNED EVENTS

SATURDAY 14TH AUGUST
RAFT RACE "BETWEEN THE STONES" in support of the RNLI....and **FAMILY FUN DAY**

SUNDAY 29TH AUGUST
THE PETE ABBOT SOUND with music of the '60s and '70s

Watch for posters at the Club, in your email, and on the website.

DUMPERS AND THINGS

At the time of writing, all four dumpers are working, though I can't guarantee that for the rest of the year!

Our Chris Cardwells Winch Experiment did not prove a success as the gearing was too high and it took more effort to turn it than the boat winches. Looking round the Internet I found a site that sells electric winches intended for recovery work and use in 4x4's at very modest cost. So I bought a 12,000lb-pull winch for the Club and installed it on the black dumper. We have been experimenting with it to see how it works. The intention is to use it for emergencies only (i.e. as back-up when a member's winch fails) rather than for the routine recovery of boats. We used it recently to recover a very heavy boat with a totally inadequate winch and it worked very well, except that it consumes a large amount of power and is intended for use in a 4x4 with the engine running to recharge the battery. In this case the recovery flattened a fully-charged battery, but fortunately we got the boat on the trailer before the battery died. We will continue to play with the winch to see if there are ways around the problem, but it is there, and if you get into real trouble, contact me and we'll use it.

All the dumpers have had their annual service and are working well. The main problems of routine maintenance are clutches (3 so far this year) and starter motors (6 so far this year). Many thanks to Tim Birch, a new member who runs a motor factors and gives us new starter motors at

cost price, saving some £80 per motor (they don't half have a big mark-up!) It's great if members can help us out like this as it cuts costs for us all. On the starter motor front I say again, please don't take the launch vehicles so far into the sea that the starter motors get wet. Salt water and electrics don't mix.

Another slight moan: sets of keys keep going missing. I have had to make up 3 new sets this year. Two sets went missing earlier in the year and so did one of our jet-washers. The locker was not broken into, so the person who stole a set of keys also stole the jet-washer (£200-worth). The lockers are covered by cctv, but the theft happened at a time when there was very little boating activity at the club, so we don't know when the washer was taken. It's all very sad when this kind of thing happens. We have chained the jet-washers to the wall to make stealing them a little more difficult, and changed all the padlocks (another £80). We also regularly check the lockers, so if the thief is reading this, if you try it again we will have a better chance of catching you.

Still on the subject of wash-downs, we are regularly finding taps left on in the lockers. This causes the water to force its way through the jet-washer and potentially damaging them, as well as wasting an unknown amount of water, which is metered. Please remember to turn off all taps before locking up.

Finally, I hope all of you enjoy your boating over the summer and stay safe.

Hugh Bagshaw

LAND YACHTING NEWS

World Championships not long now.

We are fast approaching another Landyacht World Championship event just across the Channel in De Panne, Belgium, taking place on 9th - 15th October. Landyachting is still a well-supported and popular sport in France and Belgium, and very popular with the people living on the coast around those countries. It is even part of the French national curriculum!

The Varne landyacht section supports the British team via its links with the British Federation of Sand and Landyacht Clubs. Sadly we have no one to send this year to compete. Another group from France crossed the Channel to visit us, but the weather was unkind to us that weekend, with very little wind.

Our come and try sessions still prove popular, and all VBC members are welcome to join in. Just look at the forum for the next date, and make contact through the section email address on the website.

Mark Serejko: Landyacht Captain

