

# Solent Soundings



Issue No. 7 - Summer 2003



Don't forget to look at <https://uk.groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/dinghysolent/info> for more photos and general discussion.

## Editorial

Last Winter Jay Milbourne set-up an inter-active web-site on MSN and invited DCA members to join. This is something I had wanted to do myself as a means for South Coast members to keep in touch, but at the time I didn't have the means, so decided to produce this newsletter instead. Of course for those without internet access, the newsletter is better. However, it's nice to be able to communicate with others on dark winter evenings. At the moment there are only four participants, myself, Jay, Roger Howard and some mysterious character called Loo Loop, so there's not much going on. It would be nice to see occasional contributions from others. There is also a chat page which could be fun if several of us log-in at the same time. I have suggested looking-in between 8pm & 9pm on any evening to increase the chance of meeting-up. The only problem there is that I keep forgetting to look-in at that time myself. The message page can, however, be viewed at any time. The site can be found on <http://groups.msn.com/MICROCRUISERSUK>. You will have to join in order to participate, but it's possible to look first. I have just added quite a lot of photos taken at rallies, and as it is impossible to transmit this newsletter through e-mail with too many pictures, this would be a good way of viewing them. I don't understand why it is so easy to put photos on the internet, but so hard to e-mail them - perhaps someone can enlighten me?

Liz



<p><b>WANTED</b></p> <p><b>Gull dinghy</b> Graham Knight</p> <p><b>Albacore</b> Please contact Liz and she will put you in touch with the buyer</p>
--



## Rally News

### Beaulieu – 24-26 May – Chris Jenkins

Chris tells me this was a rally of two, himself and Keith Holdsworth. John and Josephine got half-way up the river and gave up - presumably because it got too late. The £5 anchoring fee was a discouragement to some, but Beaulieu is a beautiful river and worthy of a visit.



## Wootton Creek - 7/8 June – Liz

The wind was S-SW 3-4 on Saturday - the weather dry but cloudy, with patches of fog and occasional gleams of sunshine. *Tessa* and I crossed Chichester Bar at 2pm, with the tide fair for Wootton Creek, although the outboard had to be employed to push us over the bar against the last of the flood. At first we had a broad reach and made good progress, but once into the Solent the wind headed us and fell light, so the o/b was employed again for the last couple of miles into the creek as time was running out. At the bridge I found Chris Jenkins with *Gispy*, Jay Milbourne with *Ka Lae* and Steve Bradwell with his *Enterprise*. The numbers might have been greater but some members were doing a stint on the DCA stand at the Beale Park Boat Show. When daylight faded we adjourned to the *Sloop* for a yarn. Heavy rain fell for several hours during the night, but we all stayed dry in our tents, and by morning the sun was shining warmly.

The forecast for Sunday was S-SW3-4 - *sigh of relief* - becoming 6 - *oh no!* None of us had far to go, so hopefully we could all get back before the wind became too strong. Leaving *J* still apparently asleep in *Ka Lae*, the rest of us set-off down the river, Chris first, then Steve and I together about 9 am. The tide and wind were favourable for a speedy return to Chichester and at first all went well. However, the wind did seem to be increasing and, having heard the forecast, I pulled down my first reef just before Ryde. There was a nasty black cloud to the east, but as it was down-wind I hoped it wouldn't worry us. Near No Man's Land Fort the wind increased further and so the second reef went in. I didn't really need it yet but didn't want to have to heave-to half-way across the shipping lane.

We were going fast enough anyway and by 11 am were off Langstone. There the sky cleared - it was becoming a beautiful day. I had just decided I could safely continue to Chichester when, without warning, the wind increased again and with it, the waves. Now hard-pressed I turned *Tessa's* bow towards Langstone. Inside the harbour the wind rose another notch and even my tiny sail was almost too much. Thankfully I headed for the creeks near The Kench where I hoped for shelter while I had lunch and waited for the tide to rise.



Chris Jenkins with *Gispy*

This was a mistake, because when I tried to move a couple of hours later, I was unable to get under weigh before being blown into the saltings. Trying to row was hopeless. Slowly I punted my way inshore during the lulls, hoping to reach sufficient shelter to lower my mast for the bridge, or perhaps even leave the boat there while I returned by road for the trailer. I was pushed steadily eastwards until finally the tide rose enough for me to get ashore at the bottom of somebody's garden. The resident helped me tie my line to his jetty and lower my last, and then held *Tessa* in deep enough water for me to start the o/b. Even under outboard it was an exciting trip back to Cobnor via Hayling Bridge. I left the mast down and motored all the way back to Cobnor. Getting down Emsworth fairway was like sitting on a bucking broncho beneath Niagara Falls. I don't think I've ever seen the harbour so rough, and the waves remained impressive until we turned into the tranquillity of Bosham Creek.



Liz

Steve Bradwell e-mailed his experience:

Dear Liz,

I left Wootton 10 or 15 minutes after you with two rolls reefed in my (cruising) mainsail. I made good progress until a short time after the large container ship passed me and the wind started to pick up. This was about 11.00 hrs. I was concerned about losing control in the increasingly choppy conditions as boat speed had risen and we had started to plane.

At this time Southampton Water was more of less down-wind so I decided to drop the main and run on the small jib I had clipped to the foredeck. While I did this a racing yacht safety RIB came



across and asked if I was OK. I said I was and thanked the skipper. Soon after this the wind shifted towards the west. Boat speed was now low with the rudder well off centre. I was unable to steer towards Southampton Water and it looked as if we would end up in the shallow water and surf somewhere near Hill Head.

Thinking that there was no point in waiting for the situation to get worse I crawled onto the foredeck to change the jib for a bigger one. I had to grab the side of the deck to stop myself sliding off as waves hit. It was a great relief to find that when sheeted-in speed was up and I could now easily point towards Calshot. I made good progress comfortably sitting-in while I watched racing yachts under full sail heeling well over while I was sailing upright and travelling only slightly slower than they. My relaxed state was soon forgotten, however, as the wind continued to increase.

Now sitting-out and heeling in the gusts I was approaching Calshot Spit. Waves were hitting us from the side and some were breaking. I ducked when a breaking wave hit as spray was thrown across the boat, but because of the wind speed most of it was landing in the water on the far side of the boat, rather than in it. Eventually thinking the side deck was about to be submerged I released the jib sheet. The sheet was wrenched from my hand and the jib seemed likely to fly apart as it flapped madly in the wind. I could not get the cleat to re-grip the sheet and was forced to hold onto it while steering at the same time. Eventually I found the right angle and got the sheet to grip. I was left shaking with the physical and mental effort.



Steve Bradwell

At least we were moving fast and in the right direction. I left the sheet cleated and sat out as far as possible in the gusts. I was approaching the Sunderland hanger and I thought that if I could get behind it I would be OK. This turned out to be the case and the wind and waves eased. The rest of the return to Warsash was uneventful. I bailed out the boat while returning occasional greetings from passing yachtsmen. I thought that was nice of them as I had suspected they might think I was mad to have been out there at all.

On returning home I checked the internet CHIMET site at the weather station at Chichester Bar. It showed winds of over 35 Knots. I doubt it was much less than force 7 where I was.

I have wondered whether I might have been better off with a heavily reefed mainsail rather than the jib. The trouble with the jib was that it was not possible to spill the wind in a gust without letting it go completely. On the other hand the boat did handle in a very steady and predictable way. I suppose I had been expecting the course to be more of a run than it turned out to be. I have also realised that perhaps the biggest danger I had been in during the Solent crossing was from falling off the foredeck and the boat drifting away faster than I could swim. Maybe I should have tied myself on there.



Steve

### Shipstall Point, Poole Harbour - 21-22 June - Keith Holdsworth

Keith Holdsworth	One Off	<i>The Flying Pig</i>
Chris Jenkins	West Wight Potter	<i>Gispey</i>
Derek Milbourne	Startrekker	<i>Ka Lae</i>
Dave Drye	Falmouth Bass Boat	
Steve Bradwell	Enterprise	
Alastair Law	Paradox	<i>Little Jim</i>
Duncan Gilchrist	Wayfarer	<i>Withy Wobbler</i>
John & Michelle Holman	Wanderer	<i>Beaky</i>
Bill Jones & Rachel	Topper Cruz	<i>Arion</i>



Many thanks to first-timer Duncan Gilchrist for the following write-up:

SHE – a one-time Wayfarer – bought as a wreck for £50 – much epoxy repaired, a two-pot poly-paint job, and many donations of ‘gear’ from friends later, she is now a ‘derivative’ (derogatory term used to describe Wayfarers that are unlikely to ever conform to class rules). But I love her anyway! I may not legally race her but that does not stop her behaving like a typical Wayfarer and charging about at speed.

A great passage maker, as you may have heard. She is NOT, however, in my opinion, good for camping aboard because, in my particular case, the tent is too heavy, the thwart is too low for stiff old me to sleep under, the under-deck stowage area is back-breaking to access, and I am such an untidy person that having to move any item on a daily basis soon leads to chaos. In cruising mode she weighs about 500 lbs.

ME – 64, on my first ever cruising/camping outing and DCA Rally (plea to the young – do not delay – get on with what you want to do TODAY!)

THE VOYAGE THERE – Launched at Poole Yacht Club (recommended for its security, all-tide slip, changing rooms open 24/7, hot showers, washbasins, loos, all cleaned daily and, if you are that way inclined, a FAB clubroom/bar/restaurant upstairs. £8.50 per day (24 hours) per dinghy. But I digress...we set off towards Shipstall Point at 15:00 hrs on Friday (yes - I know) and on from there round the south of Round Island, with centre-board and rudder scraping the bottom into ‘Round Island Lake’ and from there along the length of ‘South Deep’, out past the Ferry (thank you Mr Honda) and, as it was high tide, mooched across the inner end of the training bank (DON’T DO THIS) and into Studland Bay, where I planned to spend the night. It ought to have been sheltered in here with a NW wind but there was a rather sickening swell coming at right angles to the wind. As I did not wish to overdose on Sturgeon, I upped anchor and hared back the way I had come, into the lee off Furzey Island where, careful to stay clear of the under-water cables, I anchored in shallow water.

After dinner I had a visit from an authoritative figure (on the shore) who expressed his concern at my being there, so close to his oil-drilling gantry! He was assured that I (no longer) intended to light fires or to come ashore (although at that time we were very nearly aground on the falling tide). Boy, was it noisy in there! Those damned oyster-catchers were piping away all night!

DAY 2 - Up before dawn (on the longest day at 04:45 hrs). After a cold breakfast and ‘breaking camp’ we were off up ‘Green Island Lake’, against quite a fast ebb tide, and then north to PYC, where I ‘used the facilities’ long before the cleaners arrived at 08:00 hrs. Some minor modifications to *Withy Wobbler* then followed, most notably removing the recently fitted GNAV. (GNAV = the ‘American’ for kicking-strap is VANG, reverse that word and you have the name for a reverse means of holding the boom down, i.e. a strut from the mast to the boom).

Determined to get to Wareham we set off with the tides ‘all wrong’ ie ‘against’ and approaching low water.

Under reefed main only we ploughed our way ‘at the charge’ (as is usual with a Wayfarer) on a dead run before a North-Easterly F3 up Wareham Channel with the mud banks exposed right out to the channel marker posts. Locals may know why but on one of the reaches the wind became dead ‘on the nose’ and Mr H rescued me again.

Did you know that there was a nunnery on the site of the hotel (on the right before the bridge) when the Vikings sacked Wareham in 817?



Fish and chips, a hot cup of tea (under a sun umbrella) and use of the 'public facilities' and we were off again against the now in-coming tide. (Actually this stop was a lot more pleasant than I have made it sound).

Once again, I would like to thank Shell Fuel Co for the assistance of their Optimax Unleaded fuel for this part of the trip. I did not risk putting the mainsail up until we were near to mark No 82 (but I did unfurl the genny on a couple of reaches to motor-sail). Then, under a reefed mainsail and genny, we had a delightfully brisk but not taxing beat into the now Easterly F2/3 in warm sunshine.

THE EVENT - The sun had been shining all day but now at 16:00 hrs, in the shade of the sails, dressed in a lightweight shirt and shorts, I felt cold. The east wind was blowing onto Shipstal Point and I was the first DCA member there. The sheltered NW corner of Long Island looked inviting so I sailed in there to get out of the wind, have a warming cup of cocoa and put a pullover on.

Almost immediately a very interesting craft sailed in looking very 'DCA'. This was a 'Paradox', which was designed by a young American who is obviously a genius! Tell us more Alastair!

Next in was a lovely robust Falmouth Bass boat. Not yet a member, Dave has a super quality cruising dinghy. Then *Gispy*, a professional looking West Wight Potter AX; followed closely by Keith, the event organiser in his lightweight, plumscious, stable, comfortable-looking own design, which I covet! Then there was a Startrekker, *Ka Lae*, flying 'exotic' American flags. So many lovely boats that I never get the chance to see at my usual racing-dinghy-orientated inland sailing club. And every new face behaving like a long-time friend!

Things could hardly get better. 'Bread of Heaven' as ever was, and a lovely day to boot.

'Things could hardly get better, and they did not!

First there was the Fire Brigade (I kid you not) with its industrial water pump, right there in among us on the beach ready to douse a potential heath fire.

Then there were the multi B-B-Q parties, virtually pushing us aside to get to 'their' best bit of beach.

Then there were the 'all-night' drunken revellers.

Have I mentioned the thunder storm?

Following my sleepless night at 'Oystercatcher Beach', a too long day in the sun for this shade-loving specimen, the down sides of my beloved *Withy Wobbler* as a sleep-aboard were starting to show. The din from the shore (20 metres away), the thunder and overtiredness all got to me so that, at about 02:00 hrs, feeling murderous, I upped anchor, in my nightwear, and with the tent still up, motored back to PYC. But, sleep was still to evade me. Parking on a finger pontoon with the wind from behind, the waves were vslapping loudly on the flat bottom panels of the Wayfarer, so that I was up again moving her to a quieter spot. My watch said 03:13 hrs as I, at last, lay down.

Swish – BOOOOOOM! The whole world rattled! (04:22 hrs)

Swish – Booom! Boom, Boom! I gave up at 05:00 hrs and started to take the tent down under the most theatrical sky ever. Then the rain came.

Short write-up? I could write a book!



Did I enjoy it? Strangely, yes. In parts. If I had been aboard any one of four other boats there I think I would have been okay.

So my big white charger does have its shortcomings? (In my creakage – yes).



Does anyone know of a lightweight, stable, cheap, easily handled sailing craft fitted with permanent full-size mattressed bed and no need to erect a tent?! Also there is a need for me to be able to have a (dry) place for everything! A cross between a "Paradox" and *Flying Pig*? DO LET ME KNOW!

Meanwhile, how do I get to attend future rallies without putting myself through 'that' again? I really MUST see more of these 'alternative' ingenious sailing boats!!

*Duncan Gilchrist*



### **Hurst Castle, Keyhaven - 5-6 July - David Jones**

This rally was noted in the Bulletin calendar as accessible by sheltered water (meaning from Keyhaven or Lymington I suppose) but the five boats that attended all started from Southampton Water and enjoyed perfect dinghy cruising conditions on both days. The winds were in accordance with the forecasts in the range 0 to 3 and from the westerly quarter. Rather cool on Saturday under thickish cloud but no rain at all. Sunday and Monday more summery.

Attending were:

Doug Jones, from Netley, making his maiden DCA rally in his self built wooden Houdini dinghy, *Esther*. The Houdini is a New Zealand design and is a real head turner. Length 13'6" and beam 6'2". Rig - balanced lug catboat. Doug's is the only example in Britain and I hope he will submit something about it to the Bulletin.

Len Wingfield, from Warsash, in *Bluey*

Keith Holdsworth in self-built *Flying Pig*

Alan Glanville, from Warsash via Newtown, IOW, in *Lowly Worm III*, self-built Ness Yawl

David Jones, from Hamble R., in *Speedy*, Beaufort class 16'6"

After settling-in we found we did not have the makings of a BBQ so each resorted to making his own version of gulash, after which the energetic (ie all except David) went for a walk to the Castle. Keith was even talking of walking around the shingle spit to the pub in Keyhaven. All must have been relieved when he found he had not brought his walking boots and decided the Castle was far enough!

David's excuse was he had spent Friday struggling with his trailer, which suffered a suspension unit collapse on arriving at Mercury Yacht Harbour, Hamble R. Only thanks to the generosity of Derek, the moorings contractor, in helping with repairs, did he make the rally.

On Sunday, Len and David sailed together to Newtown entrance for a lunch stop and then onwards to Warsash and Ashlett Creek respectively. Doug and Alan omitted the Newtown diversion and returned to Netley and Warsash. Keith lingered and was not observed leaving.





## Cowes - Folley Inn - 19/20 June - Liz Baker

We had S-SW winds F3-4 and fine weather for the whole week-end, despite a threat of thundery showers from the Met. Office. I set sail from Cobnor at 7am, hoping the last couple of hours of the early morning tide would enable me to reach the IOW before turning. I had missed my planned Friday afternoon departure by letting *Tessa* go aground on a falling tide while parking my trailer. By 8am I had nipped through the swatchway off Black Point and was heading towards Langstone on a close reach. Unknown to me at the time, David Sumner and his Mirror, *Curlew*, were at that moment setting sail from Itchenor.

We made good progress at first and were beyond Langstone by 9am, but then the wind changed and we were unable to make any progress against the now contrary tide, so used the o/b to help gain the sheltered waters off the IOW where, just beyond Ryde, I stopped for lunch and a snooze in warm sunshine. By the time the tide was running my way again the wind had dropped, and so we approached the Medina helped by occasional bursts from *Suzie*. Once past the chain ferry I noticed a Falmouth Bass Boat tacking up-river ahead, and also a 420. I dismissed the 420 as unlikely to be



David Willis in Falmouth Bass Boat, with Dave Sumner behind, & Jay on the right

DCA, but the Bass Boat looked hopeful, and turned out to be David Willis coming to his first DCA rally. Then I realised that the "420" was actually Len Wingfield sailing *Bluey*. DCA boats were popping-up all around me like mushrooms - suddenly there was David Sumner's Mirror astern - where did he spring from?

We all cooked aboard our boats and then adjourned to the Folley Inn, which was packed and noisy, with a live band and table dancing. We sat outside on the terrace and watched the fun through the windows before returning to our peaceful anchorage for the night.

Next day we all set off about 8 am, as the falling tide and on-shore wind were threatening to leave us high and dry. Len and David Willis were returning to Warwash. I had been looking forward to sailing back to Chichester in company with Dave Sumner, but by the time I emerged into Cowes Roads he was heading for Leigh-on-Solent, and I prefer the rural and wooded hills of the Isle of Wight. I was surprised how clearly I could see his tiny boat, even when he was right over near the mainland shore. I did lose him for a while, and as the sea was beginning to get choppy I wondered whether he'd decided to pack-it-in at Leigh-on-Solent; however, after crossing the shipping lane between the forts and approaching Langstone, I spotted him again - well astern beyond Gilkicker. By 11.30 am it was I was back in Chichester Harbour - I had taken Monday off as a contingency day in case of a slow return, and it was still only Sunday morning! Dave sailed in 45 minutes later.

## The Kench, Langstone Harbour - 9/10 August - Dave Sumner

This was a good rally with plenty of participants. It took place during the period of hot weather when 100F had been recorded inland.

- 1 George Strube, 16 foot Peterboat (double ender) *Goldeneye*
- 2 David Jones, Beaufort, *Speedy*
- 3 Len Wingfield, the pre war designed dinghy *Bluey*
- 4 Doug Jones, Houdini lug rigged double-ender
- 5 Liz Baker, Cormorant *Tessa*
- 6 David Sumner, Mirror *Curlew*
- 7 Keith Butcher and Sandra, Gull (sailed in Chichester Harbour only)

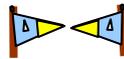
Saturday was a little misty with winds averaging SE2/3. *Curlew* and *Goldeneye* sailed in company from Itchenor, with a very pleasant stop for lunch at East Head. When off the Winner the Langstone beacon was not visible and we used a bit of dead reckoning to find the entrance. *Tessa* sailed from



Cobnor but remained in visual contact with the shore by taking an inshore route. The Houdini made its first long passage, all the way from Southampton Water, and against the wind at that. *Speedy* came over from Bembridge, and *Bluey* from Northney. Once again the Kench proved to be a good venue for dinghy cruisers, not too over-civilised and with a choice of beaches to suit the wind direction. In the evening Liz organised a barbecue but we forgot that many of the boats had anchored off ready for the morning tide and could not get ashore. To our surprise, we saw fox cubs playing around just outside our pool of light. It was a warm night, and David Jones suggested sleeping without the tent, which I did, pulling the trysail over my bed to keep the dew off.

Next day everyone left early except the Cobnor/Itchenor group, who waited until nearly low water in the afternoon. The entrance channel proved to be really choppy with all the jet skis together with a lively wind-over-tide condition. But once out of the harbour winds were very light, only freshening up to S3 in time to enter Chichester Harbour, which Tessa and the Peterboat did via the secret swashway and Curlew did by rounding the West Pole.

*Dave Sumner*



### ***Remaining Rallies 2003***

<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Sat pm HW</u></b> <b><u>Portsmouth</u></b>	<b><u>Venue</u></b>	<b><u>Rally Host</u></b>
* 13-14 Sept	13-56	Oxey Lake, Lymington OS 197 / 744 044 Meet on small beach where sea wall bends sharply to left towards Moses Dock.	David Jones
* 27-28 Sept	13-39	Bursledon traditional end-of-season meet at The Jolly Sailor. We usually meet-up on Lands End Hard. Some prefer to continue under the bridges and up-river for a quieter night. Tide is right for a cruise to Curbridge or Botley on Sunday for those who can lower their masts.	Liz Baker
* 11-12 Oct	12-54	Lunch on Fowley Island then visit seals in Oare Rythe and overnight in Snowhill Creek.	Liz Baker

\* Accessible by sheltered water

Map references relate to the OS Landranger serie



Len Wingfield & *Bluey*