



MARINA MATES



ISSUE NUMBER 45 July 2009

Thundercats North East has just been launched by Hartlepool Marina

The weekend of the 23rd and 24th of May at Seaton beach was a huge success with Hartlepool marina hosting the worlds most exciting new water sports - 'Thundercat Racing'. Twenty boats each teamed with a pilot and co-pilot of all ages and abilities travelled from all over the UK from different backgrounds to show their skill as they battled it out through speed, strength, stamina and pure determination, to take home the title of round 3 & 4 of the RYA national Championships.

Over the weekend the beach saw 2000 + people in and around the area. We were helped out a lot with the weather on the Sunday as everybody seemed to be proud of the suntan they had picked up. I did actually notice as I began to change to a light shade of pink. Some say it could have been Costa del Seaton. Nevertheless the racers and Thundercat community were overwhelmed with the response of everyone in Hartlepool and they thoroughly enjoyed the event, so much so in fact, that they are already planning for next year's competition here at Hartlepool.

Many thanks to those berth holders that volunteered to make the event work... with out people like yourselves it wouldn't have been possible... thanks again. Anyone that missed out and now wants a piece of the action remember berth holders get 10 % discount on Thundercat rides. Check out our tiers on www.thundercatsnortheast.webs.com or contact Adam.

For some exciting launch offers on getting your own Thundercat - whether you want to have fun with the family, perhaps get out the Ringo or water skis, explore the coastline, or when you get the need for an adrenaline rush, just turn up and race - simple as that. If you want to try a boat before you buy and receive honest advice, contact Shaun on 07951562570. Thunder Cats are all different but to an untrained eye they all look the same. Each boat has its own unique features designed for individual needs... Let us help you to choose the right package and become part of our Community!

Next event is Dockfest on the 4th and 5th July and we would like as many boats as possible to dress in / hoist flags, banners and colours during the weekend for this event as it marks 400 days to go till tall ships - be part of it!

Observations From The Lock Office

A new sailing and boating season has started and on behalf of the Marina staff and Operatives I wish you a really active and exciting season.

The lock office, as you may appreciate, is very involved in your activities and in particular your safety. We try and maintain a watchful eye on your passages in and out of the lock. Additionally, we monitor along with the Coastguards, Coast watch station and the RNLI your activities in the bay. We are always ready to help in anyway we can. It is with your safety in mind that I need to draw your attention to a number of points that need addressing from our observations.

1 Vessel movements within the Marina:

More and more activities are taking place on the water within the marina. A number of official clubs participate in diving activities. They usually confine their activities close to the wall near the Wingfield Castle and always contact the lock control to advise us of their location and numbers etc.

The Marina Thunder Cats are becoming very popular now and are frequently used in the display area to the West of the Marina. These vessels move very fast and are very manoeuvrable.

Various training organizations based on the marina use the display area for their respective functions. The THYC also regularly use this area for sail training. Berth holders regularly test their engines following repairs etc. You will see, therefore, the importance of contacting the Marina Control by radio before leaving your berths for whatever reason, to ascertain if any activities may affect you and your passage.

2 Radio Communication:

It is quite disconcerting when vessels turns up at the lock gate for a lock out or lock in, without radioing their intentions beforehand. They believe the lock operatives can mind read. Often we think, do they want fuel or a lock out? There is a serious lack of VHF radios on vessels, leading to all sorts of communication problems. Many vessels these days are contacting us on mobile phone which, in fact, takes us away from the control panel to answer the land line. Apart from the obvious dangers of going to sea reliant on a mobile phone, this practice should be discouraged. VHF radios can be purchased from the lock office at a very reasonable price from as little as £75 or at other outlets. Considering their importance this is a small price to pay. It is important to maintain radio communication with the lock control at all times until you reach your berth. This also applies on leaving the lock, seaward, until you reach the piers.

3 Life Jackets:

Considering the cost of some of the vessels leaving the lock to go to sea, it seems unthinkable that crews will risk their own lives and, in some cases that of their families, by not providing life jackets. Life Jackets should be donned as soon as you board your vessel and not be left in a closed locker to use in the case of an emergency. A recent study by the RNLI revealed that on the day of the study only 57% of crews wore life Jackets. Please give this some serious thought. If by any chance you get into difficulties, the men of the RNLI put their lives at risk searching for you in all sorts of weather conditions. Why not give yourself and them a chance of carrying out a successful rescue. On one occasion, a boat leaving the Marina was observed to have four adults and a dog on board. The only life jacket worn was fitted to the dog.

4 Vessel Names:

An increasing number of vessels are arriving in the lock without any form of identification, i.e. no obvious name displayed. This coupled, in some cases, with the lack of a radio on board, proves to be quite a problem for the lock operatives to log out and book in nameless vessels. At least one vessel has its name on its stern frame, barely noticed behind the outboard engine and being of a size of approx one inch. Even with binoculars it is difficult to make out the name from the windows of the control room.

If you are not able to paint your vessel's name, why not talk to Shaun who has a special printer to make whatever name and size you require. He will also fix it to the vessel for you for a small sum. This would be much cheaper than paying for a sign writer.

May I take this opportunity to draw your attention to a free booklet on '**SEA SAFETY**', which has an interactive CD – Rom, issued by the RNLI. These booklets can be obtained from the lock office or from Mick Craddy. This booklet contains essential information for all who go to sea. Additionally Mick informed me that one of the RNLI officials will inspect your vessel if requested and highlight to you any problematic areas connected with safety. **This service is free of charge.**

5 Lock Procedures:

When approaching the lock from the marina or the sea remember – **LARGE VESSELS FIRST - SMALLER VESSELS LAST** and **PLEASE use your radio to inform the lock of your intentions!** Well that about sums up my observations for this issue. I hope that the information above is helpful and guides you towards safer and more relaxed sailing.

Regards Ray

The big blue

- The ocean covers nearly three quarters of the planet's surface.
- It contains 97% of its water and has an average depth of nearly 4 kilometers.

Invisible life

- Every teaspoon of seawater contains thousands to millions of mostly unnamed microscopic organisms.
- The total weight of marine microbes is greater than that of fish and whales combined.

Global air conditioner

- The ocean provides half the world's oxygen and absorbs a quarter of the carbon dioxide we produce.
- Ocean circulation cools the tropics and warms the poles.

We are changing the ocean

Sea level seesaw

- Around 125,000 years ago, sea level was 4 metres higher than today. 20,000 years ago it was 120 metres lower.
- Today, the rate of sea level rise is accelerating.

Goodbye Arctic ice

- Arctic sea ice has decreased by a third since the 1970s.
- It is likely to disappear completely in summer by 2040 – maybe even sooner.

Fish stocks under pressure

- Around 130 million tonnes of fish are taken from the seas every year. . Most commercial fish stocks are over exploited.

Isn't it about time we all did our bit and helped the planet instead of gradually killing it!

STEEL APPEAL

God help the men that go to sea in boats that are built like toys
They may be ok for a lad in the bath but the sea will sort the men from the boys
When you call up on your radio to go to sea and push and bump in the lock
Or even when you are actually out sailing and manage to find a very large rock
That will be the time when I am sure that you'll feel
I should have been wise and bought a proper boat of steel

Mike Fellows

One afternoon a lawyer was riding in his limousine when he saw two men at the side of the road eating grass. Disturbed by what he had seen, he ordered his driver to stop and he got out to investigate. He asked one man, 'why are you eating grass?' 'We don't have any money for food,' the poor man replied. 'We have to eat grass.' 'Well then, you can come with me to my house and I'll feed you,' the lawyer said. 'But sir, I have a wife and two children with me. They are over there, under that tree.' 'Bring them along,' the lawyer replied.

Turning to the other poor man he stated, 'you can come with us as well.' The second man, in a pitiful voice, then said, 'but sir I also have a wife and six children with me!' 'Bring them as well,' the lawyer replied. They all got into the car which was no easy task, even for a car as large as the limousine was. Once underway, one of the poor fellows turned to the lawyer and said, 'sir, you are too kind. Thank you for taking all of us with you.' The lawyer replied, 'glad to do it. You'll love my place. The grass is almost a foot high.'

BODY STATISTICS

It takes your food seven seconds to get from your mouth to your stomach.

One human hair can support 3kg (6lb).

The average man's penis is three times the length of his thumb.

A woman's heart beats faster than a man's.

There are about one trillion bacteria on each of your feet.

Women blink twice as often as men.

The average person's skin weighs twice as much as the brain.

Your body uses 300 muscles to balance itself when you are standing still.

If saliva cannot dissolve something, you can't taste it.

Women reading this will be finished now.

Men reading this are probably still busy checking their thumbs.

A blonde wanting to earn some extra money decided to hire herself out as a 'Handy Woman', and started canvassing the neighbourhood. She went to the front door of the first house and asked the owner if he had any odd jobs for her to do. 'Well, I guess I could use somebody to paint the porch,' he said. 'How much will you charge me?' The blonde quickly responded, 'how about £30.00?' The man agreed and told her that the paint and everything she would need was in the garage.

The man's wife, hearing the conversation, said to her husband, 'Does she realise that our porch goes all the way around the house?' He responded, 'That's a bit cynical, isn't it?' The wife replied, 'You're right. I guess I'm starting to believe all those dumb blonde jokes.' Sometime later, the blonde handywoman came to the door to collect her money. 'You finished already?' the husband asked. 'Yes', the blonde replied, 'and I had enough paint left over so I gave it two coats – no extra charge.' Impressed, the man reached into his pocket for the £30.00 and handed it to her. 'And by the way,' the blonde added ... 'It's not a Porche – it's a Lexus.'

SOME OF THE UNIMAGINATIVE AREA NAMES USED IN THE SHIPPING FORECAST

VIKING Sandbank in the North Sea
NORTH / SOUTH UTSIRE Utsira, an island off Norway's west coast
FORTIES Sandbank in the North Sea
CROMARTY A river estuary
DOGGER Sandbank in the North Sea
FISHER Another sandbank in the North Sea
GERMAN BIGHT Sea area between Dutch and Danish headlands
TRAFALGAR A headland
FITZROY Vice- Admiral Robert FitzRoy
SOLE Sandbank west of Scilly
MALIN Headland
BAILEY A sandbank between Iceland and Scotland

SAILING BY

The tune 'Sailing By' that we all wait for prior to the Shipping Forecast was written by Ronald Binge and is played before the first of the Shipping Forecasts. It takes up any spare time and ensures that the forecast begins at precisely 00.48. There were plans to axe the tune which brought a lot of disapproval from yachtsmen and Radio 4 listeners. The broadcast times and frequency are BBC Radio 4 : Long Wave (198kHz) at 00.48, 05.36, 12.01, 17.54 (British local time)

IS THAT THE CORRECT BUOY?

What exactly does 'Fl (3)15s' mean to the yachtsman or navigator? Obviously, it's a buoy with a light flashing in a group of three at 15 second intervals. But, and this is the big but! When do you start counting to time the flashes?

The answer is, start to count as soon as you see the first flash and carry on counting the seconds - **until the first flash comes around again**. Whether a light flashes or occults, the timing is the whole cycle, not just the period of darkness. It also pays to train yourself to count seconds accurately. It's amazing if there are three persons counting, invariably you would get three different answers. The old proven standby of timing a light using; a thousand and one, a thousand and two works like a charm for up to about twenty seconds.

Don't try to fit the light flashes to suit where you THINK you are, you want to know WHERE you are for certain!

One day I came home and was greeted by our lass dressed in a sexy nightie. 'Tie me up.' She purred, and you can do anything you want.' So I did and went out sailing!

PUFFIN'S LOG

Sir Chris Bonington, the famous mountaineer, said of Puffin's Log: "What a lovely and very special book. It's one that all generations can enjoy - the older, like myself, with nostalgia, and the younger, as an inspiration to go out and adventure. I love the illustrations and the freshness of the narrative - it takes me back to my own childhood and the adventures that I enjoyed."

In the 1950s Jocelyn Greenway, wrote articles about her family holidays and many of these accounts were published at the time with sketches and photographs by her husband Robert. Cathy Woodhead, their daughter, has put the articles about the trips in the family's quite small Hillyard 22-ft sailing boat, Puffin, into a book called Puffin's Log. Puffin was kept in Poole Harbour and from here the family with Cathy's brother and sister went on various voyages to France, and the canals of Belgium and the Netherlands. In the extract below Jocelyn and Robert were on their own returning the boat to Dorset after a family trip as far as The Hague.

In the morning we found that the wind had risen to fresh and was blowing from about south southwest, anyway there was too much south in it for Eastbourne to be a healthy place to stay. We did not much care about the prospect of beating round Beachy Head as we were on a lee shore, and our engine was inclined to oil up the plugs and stop, however we decided to try and get round that day as we did not want this part of the journey to take longer than was necessary. The waves were breaking on the beach, and we launched the dinghy as quickly as possible, fortunately without getting it swamped in the process, and rowed out to Puffin. We hoisted the sails and put a good reef in the mainsail, hauled up the anchor and were away. The engine had decided to start and we kept it gently turning over in case of need.

The channel lies close inshore, and we had to keep just outside a line between the dance hall on the pier and a small fort on the front. This meant taking very short tacks. Any qualms we had soon disappeared in the enjoyment of seeing how beautifully Puffin was riding over the quite large waves; It was very exciting, and getting more so as we neared the point, when suddenly a jib sheet parted and the sail flapped wildly. We got it down, getting soaked to the waist in the process, and stowed it in the forepeak. This was no place for doing repairs. We could not make up well enough without it, and the engine was again making oiling-up sort of noises, so we came about and ran for the pier, gybing once or twice in the troughs when the boat rolled too violently.

It did not take us long to get back, and we dropped anchor under the lee of the pier. There was not much shelter there, but it was the best we could do. It was then that we saw that one of the stays was broken, all but two strands, which somehow were still holding. Another tack at the point and it would almost certainly have gone, with who knows what to follow. We were very thankful that the jib sheet had broken after all, and that we had been forced to return. We left everything on board as shipshape as we could, tying the stay for the time being and taking the broken sheet ashore.

Puffin's Log has 113 pages, 27 sketches, 35 photographs, 5 maps and a glossary of nautical terms. It is an A5 paperback, the ISBN number is 978-0-9561469-0-8 and the price is £9.99. To order a copy either go to the website www.puffinslog.co.uk and follow the links, or send a cheque for £12.74 (inc p&p) to Delfryn Publications, Delfryn, Borth y Gest, Porthmadog LL49 9TW. Alternatively you can order a copy by telephoning 01223 894870.

WHITBY TO HARTLEPOOL

Leaving the Whitby bell buoy well astern
Now's the time to do your turn
Heading north, Boulby cliffs appear
Once past these your course is clear
Huntcliff is the last big height
Get past this and see the South Gare Light
You must still sail with all due care
The Saltscar buoy can cause quite a scare
You are now sailing in the large Tees bay
It should now be difficult to lose your way
In the dark you see the industrial lights
During the day the industrial shite
Then you cross the shipping lane
A busy place, so check and check again
Heading for the fairway buoy
Nearly home but don't be coy
The rocks at Longscar are all around
Lose concentration and you'll run aground
Get past these and now head for the Heugh
You've now reached Hartlepool and gone far enough!

Mike Fellows

END OF A DECADE

I sailed 'KES' for probably the very last time on 25th June 2009 as she had been sold to a nice guy called Spence from Arbroath. We, that is myself, Norman Brown and the new owner Spence sailed her none stop up to Arbroath, setting sail at 05.00hrs on 25th June and arriving at her new berth on 26th June after a very good and comfortable 28 hour passage. We encountered dolphins, sun, thick fog and mostly head winds, but it was still a very good and memorable sail. 'KES' is a lovely and very safe boat to sail and she will handle almost any weather, just taking it in her stride. I'd owned her for ten years and had done all the long voyages I had wanted to do, so it was time to pass her on to someone else to appreciate her for what she is, 'A proper little ship' and fulfil their own dreams. So I would like to take this opportunity to wish Spence and his crew all the very best with safe and happy sailing and fair winds.

Mike Fellows

WALK IN DOCTORS SURGERY

Dave Horsley has kindly informed me that there is a 'Walk in Surgery' situated in **Victoria Road Health Centre in Hartlepool. It is open from 08.00hrs to 20.00hrs and the telephone number is 01429 890947.** So if you have any ailments that warrant a doctor, you know where to go, thanks for that Dave.