

COMMODORE'S LOG – No. 2

The new Executive Committee have settled into their role and have tackled the tasks before them. Steady progress has been made on all fronts in particular the following:-

New RIB

After considerable research by Julian Barber and Ben Jones a RIB for the Sailing Committee has been selected. The RIB is a 5.4M Solent RIB, with a 60Hp outboard. The boat is new and benefits from long term warranties on both the hull and engine. The cost is £13,500 and a full report is posted on the board and web site. *I am delighted that this long awaited facility will prove a significant asset to the club and its activities.*

I have attended meetings with the Marine Leisure Users Group to discuss the following:-

Harbours

The Harbourmaster, Howard Le Cornu who has presented concept plans for the improvement of St. Helier Harbour and the increased provision of berths of all types. The draft plans have been drawn up by Marina Projects Ltd and have, in large part, addressed many of the concerns regarding the provision and cost of drying berths, cradles and the effects on the heritage aspects on the harbour. This major project would be undertaken in "stand alone phases" over several years, if approval and technical issues can be resolved. Whilst it is still early days, some of our feedback is already constructively influencing their thoughts, and as soon as the thoughts are available for public consultation I have invited Howard and the consultants to the Club to brief the Membership on their proposals which are subject to technical and feasibility review, but I believe they present exciting possibility for the development of the port and a shift in emphasis from commercial to leisure use within the Albert and Victoria piers.

I have also been informed that a proposition due to be put before the States of Jersey on the 18th September concerning the creation of the States of Jersey Development Company (SoJDC), a body that would take over the remit of WEB and extend its interests to all States "redundant" properties, island wide. One of the primary declared areas on interest is the area deemed, East of Albert that encompasses the whole Harbour Area and includes the RoRo facility on the Elizabeth pier.

I believe it is vital not only for the Yacht Club but the whole island that the strategic importance on the harbour is fully recognised and provided for and not sacrificed to the temptation to pursue short term financial gains by the creation of residential units and other inappropriate commercial developments and undertakings at the expense of marine facilities and resources. Whilst I do not want to prejudge this agency, history of WEB is not, in my opinion a happy one. Having created the Elizabeth marina, "always exciting to get in and out of!", but with the most inadequate inconvenient car park provision imaginable. You may rest assured that the Executive will be keeping a close eye on developments and will welcome any contribution from Members in keeping track of the intentions of this agency should it come into being.

Harbour Security and the Parish

I attended an informal meeting with Howard Le Cornu and Simon Crowcroft regarding the security problems of the Elizabeth marina and harbours in general. Harbours are installing £200,000 of new security equipment that should be complete by the autumn, the Parish are also looking for increased numbers of Honorary Police, some who may have a particular interest in the harbour to assist and patrol the area along with a volunteer harbour patrol, Some interesting ideas emerged and I hope these will be developed in the future. I suggested a 'Boat Watch' – in the form of dedicated phone line for fast response and alerting the marina and Coastguard on anything doubtful or requiring their assistance within the harbour area. Harbours have ordered 24 Boat Watch signs that will be placed round the marinas in the next month.

Any member resident in the Parish of St Helier aged between 20 and 68 who would like further details on joining the Honorary Police please contact Constable Simon Crowcroft on Tel 811811 or

email constable@posh.gov.je If we all play our part in maintaining security then we can reduce the incidence of such appalling and mindless vandalism that occurred earlier in the year at the Elizabeth marina.

SOLAS V

On matters closer to home the function room hosted a lecture given by Gus Lewis, legal advisor to the RYA and sponsored by Harbours on the requirements of the SOLAS convention, introduced on the 1st July this year. The lively meeting was attended by 65 people and heard from Capt Peter Moore, (Dep Harbourmaster) and Capt Peter Lawrence of Jersey Coastguard on why and how the provisions of the law would be enforced. It was the declared intention of the current officers that these powers would be used to educate and advise; only resulting in legal action in extreme cases or persistent offenders. As stated in my previous log most of the requirements would be usual practice for most responsible and experienced skippers, and I felt that the meeting was rather, "preaching to the converted", however those less conscientious should be aware that a brochure is available at the club and on our website outlining the main points of the convention.

The Function Room

One or two members have approached me regarding the name "function room" which they feel could be improved upon. I tend to agree, whilst it was OK as a working title I think something more identifiable with the Club and its heritage would be more fitting. Please let me have your ideas on a suitable name, the Westward room has been suggested, which I think works but am happy to consider alternatives. Drop the office an email or a note in the suggestion box.

The Rib Section

The New RIB section got off to a flying start, by taking the Sailing committee to Chausey for their annual outing. The glorious evening was blessed by a stunning sunset over Chausey sound, a visitation by dolphins on the outward journey, and a BBQ with burnt burgers and chilled wine was perfect! The rib section had its first meeting this weekend attended by 15 people who got to know each other and decide of plans and events for the future. Between Chris Lanyon and myself we have handed out 7 membership applications on the strength of the RIB section and I am, convinced of its potential to provide active boating members, RYA candidates, and a lots of fun.

New Members

The new Members evening was a terrific event, Mathew and his team surpassed themselves and the atmosphere and entertainment was great. I welcomed members of the all the rescue services, RNLI, States of Jersey Fire & Rescue Service, and our own RYA representatives. I thanked them all for being there when things go wrong, and as recently witnessed in the press, it can happen to the best of us!

Building Committee

The Building committee having fulfilled its tasks over the last 12 months or so disbanded and handed responsibility for the final, minor bits of snagging, to Mike Stevens and his House Committee. Who will run these in conjunction with the day-to-day issues of the fabric of the Club. I must admit it has some of the characteristics of the Forth Bridge, but the snagging list is getting shorter!

Many thanks to all concerned, in making all of the above possible.

David Langlois

Monday, 13 July 2009