

# Seaward Squadron

Rally Report - Cowes Isle of Wight - June 10th to 12th 2016



The Seaward Squadron in Cowes Yacht Haven

Cowes was chosen as the venue of the 2016 Seaward Squadron Rally. This central location enabled a good turnout, with boats coming from all around the Solent, Weymouth and Guernsey.

“Tasman” (Seaward 49) and “Vikla III” (Seaward 35) were the first to arrive on the Thursday; they were joined later in the day by Alchemy (Seaward 35). The remainder of the fleet started to arrive, at Cowes Yacht Haven, on the Friday and the marina staff arranged for boats to be moored close together, which gave a very sociable gathering.



By the afternoon, eighteen Seawards had arrived; ranging in size from “Mollie” (Seaward 19) to “Tasman” (Seaward 49). The pontoons were buzzing, lined with peoples pride and joys as everyone made new friendships or renewed old ones.

<b>Seaward Squadron</b>				Printed 10 Aug 2016
Members Attending Rally -Cowes Yacht Haven June 10th - 12th 2016				
Boat Name	Type	Skipper's Name	Crew's Name	Home Port
Alchemy	35-004	David Harland	Ann Harland	St Peter Port
Blue Dawn	23-085	John Hardwick		Southampton
Boat Development Co		William Rhys-Jones	-	Cowes
Boat Development Co		Stephen Thomas	Helena Thomas	Cowes
Boat Development Co		Alan Kirkpatrick	-	Cowes
Boat Development Co		Chris Clayton	-	Cowes
Elena	23-096	Anthony Lewis	Judie Lewis	Swanwick
Endeavour	29-034	Angus Belcher		Cowes
Jumper	25-040	Michael Awty	Mark Foster	Hamble Point Marina
Kipar II	23-115	Cristoforo Rocco	-	Port Grimaud, France
Kuonana III	25-073	Alastair Cameron	Alison Cameron	Alderney
Lady Ruth	23-041	Richard Villalard	-	St Peter Port
Merlin	25-018	Ron Foster		Yarmouth, IOW
Mollie	19-009	Paul Frampton		Hythe Marina
Pegasus	25-019	Barrie Humphreys	Barbara Humphreys	Bucklers Hard
Sandpiper	25-068	Ian Nixson	Norah Ramsay	Hythe Marina
Sarnia	25-035	Roger Crew	Alan Gill	East Cowes
Sea Fox	23-100	John Cobring	Sylvia Cobring	Lymington
Sea Rider	23-082	Guy Morgan		Cobb's Quay Poole
Seaward Lass	25-022	Elizabeth Guy	David Guy	Cowes
Seventh Heaven	29-018	Stephen Mogg	Gillian Mogg	Ocean Village,
Sirius of Weymouth	25-027	Euan McNair	Elizabeth McNair	Weymouth
Tasman	49-001	Paul Kelsey	Debbie Kelsey, Chris Pink, Jane Pink	Cowes IOW
Verity	23-103	Felix Hetherington	Diana Hetherington	Bembridge Harbour
Vikla III	35-008	Robbie McCann	Jane McCann	Lymington

25 Records Listed .



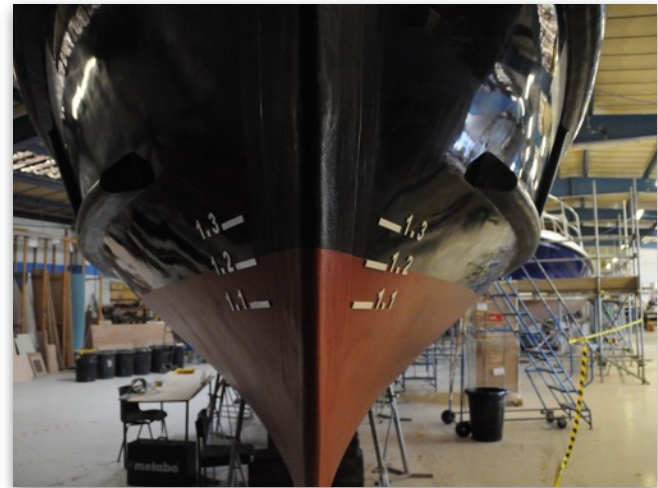
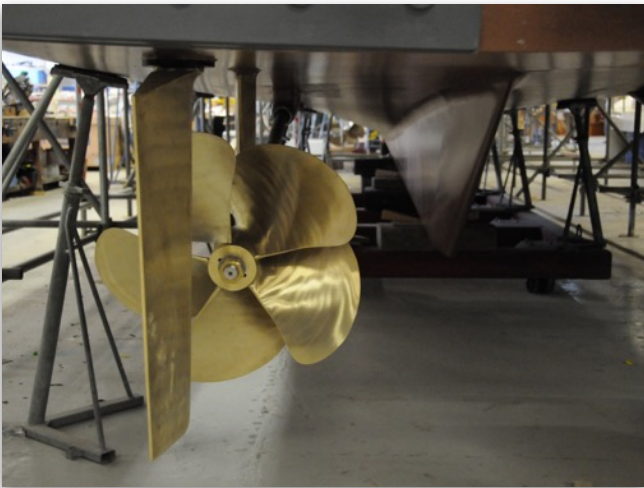
That evening skippers and crew gathered on the pontoon for drinks before strolling along Cowes High Street to the Island Sailing Club where a fine hot buffet was enjoyed overlooking the Solent.



Drinks at the pontoon party



Saturday dawned with an overcast sky but the clouds soon cleared to bring a reasonable day. After breakfast, many skippers took advantage of the opportunity to visit the Seaward factory.



There they saw the five craft under construction at the time, a 40' Pilot Boat, a Seaward 42, a Seaward 39, a Seaward 35 and a Seaward 19. They were also shown the impressive new woodworking facilities that had recently been installed. These will enable Seaward to have closer control of production of the cabinetwork on their craft.



On Saturday evening another Pontoon Party took place before Squadron members made their way to the Royal London Yacht Club. Pre-dinner drinks were enjoyed on the balcony before moving to the elegant dining room for the Gala Dinner.



Wine to be enjoyed with the meal and for the pre-dinner drinks was kindly provided by The Boat Development Company. David Harland said a few words of welcome before the meal.

After the meal was enjoyed, William Rhys-Jones, Sales & Marketing Director of Seaward, gave a brief summary of developments within the company and plans for the future.



David Harland (left) and William Rhys-Jones (right) address the Squadron after the dinner

*“Ladies and Gentlemen: The Boat Development Company is delighted to be attending its 4<sup>th</sup> Seaward Squadron Rally. We had the pleasure of meeting many of you already at Yarmouth, Dartmouth and St Peter Port and have met more of you today here at Seaward’s current home in Cowes.*

*Since last year’s rally we have been busy on both the leisure and commercial side of the business. We recently delivered boat one of the two Nelson 40 pilot boats ordered by Genoa Pilots, a customer who has had Nelson 40s in the past, has tried many other hull forms in the meantime and then came to us for modern versions of the best boat that they ever had.*

*Our first of class Seaward 39 and 42 motor yachts are taking shape, as many of you will have seen during the factory tours today. These will be worthy flagships of the range, which we hope will help us to both retain existing customers for longer and to attract new buyers. We are now looking to introduce a new two-cabin Seaward 32, adopting many of the features incorporated in the new 39.*

*The first three years have largely been about evolving and developing the range, building up a good team of people and taking control of more elements of the production process. We have recently brought both electrical work and joinery in-house, setting up our own woodworking shop and spray booth, the first fruits of which can be seen in the new 42, 39 and 35 in build.*

*Market conditions remain tough. We are fortunate to have a niche product, much appreciated by knowledgeable boaters in both the leisure and commercial sectors.*

*We are delighted that Angus is back to good health. Sadie, of course, remains the glue holding us all together. She even has her own on-line shop now, where you can order some rather nice Seaward-logo’d Gill sailing gear.*

*Finally, I would like to propose a toast to David, who has worked very hard to organise another great rally.”*

Each year an award is made of the John Hickman cup. This is given to the skipper, who it is judged, has made the most effort to attend the rally. This year the worthy winner was Richard Villalard, who had made the 100-mile passage from Guernsey, in his Seaward 23, single-handed.



The Seaward Squadron is most grateful for the support that **Everard Insurance** gives in sponsoring this award.

An additional award was presented this year. This was given to Paul Kelsey, who having just made the passage from East Cowes Marina, across the river to Cowes Yacht Haven, had travelled the least distance, in the largest boat. He was given a coffee mug decorated with a chart of the Solent. (Not to be used for navigation.)

The Boat Development Company had kindly donated a number of Seaward Caps and these were raffled. The lucky winners were very pleased with their prizes.

With these formalities completed the evening came to an end and the party made their way back to the boats.

Next day dawned as a bright clear day and the squadron departed for their home ports.



These smart Sailing Caps, along with Seaward Branded Gill Crew Jackets and Polo Shirts are available from :  
<http://seawardboat.com/index.php/sadies-seaward-shop/>



SADIE'S SEAWARD SHOP

## News from the Factory

The Boat Development Company celebrated its 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday building Seaward boats with 25 employees working on a series of interesting projects and developments. Those who have visited the factory will have noted many upgrades and developments.

During the year both electrical installation and joinery construction have been taken in house in order to avoid the effects of inconsistencies of delivery recently experienced in those supply chains and having done this the company will be even better placed in the future.

### Important Commercial Boat projects have been completed.

On the 21<sup>st</sup> April the first of two new Seaward Nelson 40 pilot boats, ordered by Genoa Pilots, was handed over to her new owners.

Lybra features a resiliently mounted wheelhouse and a foam-elastomer fender with pusher-bow. She is powered by twin FPT (Fiat Powertrain) engines, developing 265hp at 2,300 rpm, giving her a top speed of 22 knots. She is built to RINA Rules and complies with Italian regulations for working vessels.

Senior Pilot Captain John Gatti from Genoa Pilots says of his new boat: "To do our job we need different types of boats. These can be divided into two categories: boats for good weather and boats for when conditions are bad. Based on our experience, the Nelsons are for sure the pilot boats best suited to rough seas. Their reliability and technical features allow us to go out in all weather conditions."

On the 15<sup>th</sup> July, Lybra's sister-ship Gemini was delivered to her new owners. Captain Massimiliano Gazzale, pilot in charge of the boats, says of Gemini and Seaward:

*"We found the boat to be excellent and more than suitable to our needs, you matched our requests exactly, a boat that can cope really well with bad weather with excellent torque on the propeller to pop out from alongside the vessels as we need."*

He adds *"We know we asked you for a lot of detail requests sometimes but the result is perfect, it was really a wonderful surprise to me when accelerating Gemini and the steering is so sensitive, the boat is really solid and well equipped, that is great! Many thanks! "*



**Motor Yachts:**

The first of class, Seaward 42 and 39, are both in build and are very significant projects for the company. The two vessels are quite different and each has numerous unique and specially developed features, both projects benefit greatly from the close cooperation of their experienced owners in the development and build. The 42 is to make her debut at this year's Southampton boat show. Seaward 35-017 and Seaward 19-10 are also in build and a new project, the Seaward 32 is also on the drawing board.



We feel the uncertainty of the Brexit situation had dulled enthusiasm in the market but recent weeks have seen new and revived interest and enquiries so we are hoping for a positive time running up to, during and after the Southampton boat show.



## The passage of “Sea Bird” from Suffolk to the West Coast of Scotland

Many Squadron members will have read about the exploits of Douglas MacDiarmid who cruised on his Seaward 23, “Morag”, all the way from his home base near Oban Scotland, to the Mediterranean. He has now sold “Morag” and upgraded to, “Sea Bird”, a Seaward 29. This report details his passage around the East Coast to his home port in West Scotland.

*Sea Bird* is a Seaward 29, built in 2003, and recently purchased from Suffolk Yacht Harbour after the sale of my much-loved Seaward 23, *Morag*.

Lightly used, but neglected in recent years, *Sea Bird* was in need of much mechanical, electrical and 'housekeeping' work before departing on her homeward voyage to the West of Scotland. This was completed to a standard, by Saturday 16th July, when we departed Levington and the River Orwell for Lowestoft. The decision to go via the East Coast, marginally shorter than down Channel and up the West, was driven primarily by a desire to experience cruising on that coast at first hand; the West being familiar from many previous voyages.

It proved to be an excellent decision, greatly enhanced by almost perfect weather for the entire trip. Over the ensuing fortnight, until locking out from the Caledonian Canal into salt water at Corpach near Fort William on 2nd August, we covered 600 sea miles in winds never above F5, more often F2 to 4. An oily calm, for example, was encountered off the notorious Flamborough Head. The briskest seas were met on the long passage (103 miles) across the Wash to Grimsby, and on the run West from Whitehills (a small ex fishing-harbour on the NE of Scotland) to Inverness; but neither occasion was more than a solid spray-filled bash to windward, and normal cruising speed of 15 knots was maintained.

### Highlights included:

- sailing in waters made famous by the pens of Maurice Griffiths and Des Sleighthome, with shoal water miles offshore, something unknown to a boy raised amongst the rocks of the Western Isles
- listening to the local accents change as we moved up the coast from port to port
- seeing how different communities have adapted to post-industrial change: Whitby and Eyemouth exceptionally well, Grimsby and Peterhead with more difficulty
- fabulous fish and chips in Eyemouth
- dolphins playing and two pilot whales passing under *Sea Bird* at Chanonry Point, Inverness Firth
- squadrons of gannets, and puffin fly pasts, off the Firth of Forth near Bass Rock
- enjoying warm welcomes wherever we made landfall, with plenty of dry British humour thrown in for good measure.



Before departure from Levington, Suffolk



Cullochy Lock, Caledonian Canal

Ports of call were Lowestoft, Grimsby, Whitby, Tynemouth, Eyemouth, Arbroath, Peterhead, and Whitehills, before entering the canal at Inverness. As a first complete transit of the canal, I was keen to enjoy numerous stops and a slow journey South through what is staggeringly beautiful scenery, especially at the Southern end from Fort Augustus onwards.

Navigation was essentially straightforward, but with due attention being given to shoals, off-lying wind farm arrays, significant headlands such as Flamborough and Rattray, and the various port control entry and departure procedures. The most informal of the latter was Whitehills, when on my approach the HM announced over the VHF, "I can see you, in the wee speed laanch (sic)!" Yacht and shipping traffic after Orfordness was light except in the mouth of the Humber and off Teeside. The greatest hazard throughout the trip was the sheer number of fishing buoys, many well marked but some virtually invisible until you were almost upon them - occasionally nerve wracking at cruising speed.



Approaching home - south of Island of Kerrera, Oban

In summary: a memorable, wonderful cruise on a superb sea boat - well done Seaward boats, your 29 is magnificent!

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Feedback about the Seaward Rally is always appreciated and suggestions of venues for next year's rally will be welcome. It is planned to increase the content and scope of the [seawardsquadron.org](http://seawardsquadron.org) website. Please use the forum to pass on your suggestions and to discuss any matters that are of interested to you.

For information about the Seaward Squadron please contact:

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