

# Seaward Squadron

## Rally 2012 - Yarmouth, Isle of Wight

Friday 8th June - Sunday 10th June 2012



### Stormy weather does not dampen Seaward Squadron Rally

As the dates for the annual Seaward Rally approached, there was much scanning of weather forecasts and listening to shipping forecasts. With a chain of low pressure systems sweeping in from the west, there was a fear that the gale force storms expected over the weekend, would have a severe impact on attendance.

Four boats, Alchemy, Greta, Storm Rider and Lady Ruth had all planned to cross the channel from Guernsey but with the uncertain situation plans had to be changed. Due to work commitments and the real chance of getting storm bound, Johann Etasse decided to cancel and Fiona Russell opted to fly over. As the organiser, David Harland, felt that he must make an effort and co-opting Richard Villalard, from Lady Ruth, as crew, found a weather window, early on Wednesday morning. As it turned out, the predicted wind did not materialise and they set off in a force 4-5 from the SW. With a strong spring tide under the keel they made record time, reaching speeds of 28 knots over the ground through the Alderney Race. Just over four hours after leaving Guernsey they were entering Yarmouth Harbour.

Later that afternoon Alchemy was joined by Larina (Jack and Lesley Acres) and Braveheart was delivered by Angus, Seawards delivery skipper, ready for John and Caroline Russell to join their boat in Yarmouth.



Celebrating a safe arrival



## Seaward Squadron Skipper & Crew List - Yarmouth 2012

(\*\* indicates boats that managed the trip to Yarmouth)

	Boat Name	Type	Skipper's Name		Crew's Name	Home Port
1	Gullfoss **	35-015	Walker	Steve	Marion & Steven	Port Solent
2	Alchemy **	35-004	Harland	David	Ann	St Peter Port
3	Braveheart **	35-003	Russell	Caroline	John	Ipswich
4	Vikla Iv	25-067	Webb	John	Sue Hayley	Hythe
5	Sea Otter	25-065	Park	Gilbert	Maire	Emsworth
6	Caladh **	25-060	Haynes	Ken	Heather	Hamble
7	Wind Rose	25-055	Nossardi	Mario	-	Genoa, Italy
8	Jumper	25-040	Awty	Michael	Janet	Hamble Point Marina
9	Storm Rider	25-029	Russell	Fiona	Patrick	St Peter Port
10	Merlin	25-018	Foster	Ron	-	Yarmouth, IW
11	Serafina	23-116	Foster	John	Marion	Lymington
12	Kipar Ii	23-115	Rocco	Cristoforo	-	Port Grimaud,
13	Larina **	23-114	Acres	Jack	Lesley	Hamble
14	Sea Song **	23-110	Palette	Michael	Rosemary	Mercury Yacht
15	Verity	23-103	Hetherington	Felix	Diana	Bembridge Harbour
16	Blue Dawn	23-085	Horton	Kevin	Margaret	Weymouth
17	Merlin	23-066	Coward	Clive	Pat	Cowes
18	Grand Finale **	23-054	Simpson	Geoffrey	Jeremy & Pat	Fowey
19	Lady Ruth	23-041	Villalard	Richard	-	St Peter Port
20	Seaward Marine		Kimber	Barry	Alison	Cowes

**The above is list of the skippers and crew that attended over the weekend**

For a time it seemed that this may be the total number of boats, skippers and crew that would be attending the rally. But Seaward owners are made of stronger stuff and plans were being made to get to Yarmouth, one way or another.

Gullfoss (Steve Walker with crew Stephen) left Port Solent on Friday afternoon but found it very heavy going and decided that they would take a break in East Cowes before coming along to Yarmouth on the Saturday morning. They came from Cowes by taxi for the evening, to join the party at the Yacht Club. Marion decided to join them via the ferry on Saturday.

During the Friday afternoon, Seaward 23 Grand Finale (Geoffrey Simpson and Jeremy) came through the Pier Heads. Geoffrey had left Fowey in the very early hours of Wednesday morning and had a twenty hour passage to Poole before coming onto Yarmouth via Lymington. He was heard to explain "I told my crew that there is a bar outside Fowey Harbour and he could expect it be a little choppy. It would seem that this year the bar had been extended somewhat – all the way to Poole".

The fact that the Lymington to Yarmouth ferry was cancelled for a time indicated the severity of the sea state so Caladh (Ken and Heather Haynes) and Sea Song (Michael Palette) decided to postpone their journeys until the Saturday morning.

By the Saturday afternoon, seven out of the eighteen expected boats had made the journey to Yarmouth and in all, thirty-two Seaward owners and their crews made it to Yarmouth by boat, air, ferry, train and car.

The first of the main events of the weekend was a meal at the Royal Solent Yacht Club on the Friday evening. The RSYC occupies an enviable position overlooking the Solent and they made the squadron most welcome. Members enjoyed drinks in the bar before an enjoyable meal.



Saturday dawned to be a reasonable day and although the wind continued to blow, sometimes at near gale force, it was dry and bright and it did not prevent everyone enjoying themselves. During the day squadron members explored the historic town of Yarmouth or took a bus to explore further a field. Ron Foster, who lives in Yarmouth, had prepared a challenging Treasure Hunt featuring questions on the history of Yarmouth and many people tested their wits against this.

The main event of the weekend was the meal at The George Hotel. Squadron members met in the bar for pre-dinner drinks where they were able to chat before going through for dinner.

Before the dinner was served David Harland said a few words of welcome to everyone at this, the 25th annual rally of Seaward owners. He made special mention of all those for whom this was their first rally and to those who had attended previous rallies. He said "it was a great pleasure to welcome two overseas skippers, Mario Nossardi who keeps his Seaward 25, Wind Rose, in Genoa, Italy and Cristforo Rocco who has a Seaward 23 in Port Grimaud, South of France."



Barry Kimber with Mario



John Webb with Cristoforo (on right)

He also said "that Yarmouth had particular significance to him as it was here that he attended his first Seaward Rally in 1989, twenty three years previously."

John Webb then kindly said grace and the meal commenced. Wine for the meal was kindly provided by Seaward Marine.

After the meal there was the presentation of the John Hickman Award for Achievement. This is presented to the skipper, whom it is considered, has made the greatest effort to attend the rally and it is based on a formula using boat length, engine size, distance travelled and skippers age. Some years it is a close run thing but this year there was no difficulty in reaching a decision and it was awarded to Geoffrey Simpson, who with his crew, Jeremy, had travelled all the way from Fowey in Cornwall in his Seaward 23, Grand Finale. Everyone agreed that Geoffrey was a very worthy winner. He received an engraved Dartington Glass tankard along with £50.00



Geoffrey receives the award from David



Tables at the Royal Solent Yacht Club

donated by Everard Insurance, who act as brokers for the Seaward Owners Insurance scheme (underwritten by Allianz)

Seaward Marine had kindly provided a Musto boating anorak as a raffle prize and this was won by Sue Hayley.

The next day the wind abated somewhat and several of the boats made their way back to their home ports. Grande Finale left Yarmouth at 04:50 on the Monday morning to make her way back to Fowey. They had a bit of a rough time until they got past The Needles and then it settled down. The return trip took seventeen hours.

Alchemy left at 10:30 and as the wind had gone round to F4 NNW they had a good run back to Guernsey, arriving just before the marina gate closed at 15:30. Caladh stayed on for an extra night and returned home on Tuesday.

The venue of the Seaward Squadron Rally 2013 has yet to be decided. Possible options are Lymington, Bembridge, Chichester and Guernsey. Suggestions gratefully received.

All the photo in this newsletter were kindly taken by Stephen Skelton. It is planned that they will be available on a web site where you will be able to download copies for your album. Details will be emailed shortly.

Details of the Seaward Squadron can be obtained from David Harland  
[davidharland@guernsey.net](mailto:davidharland@guernsey.net)



## Notes from Squadron Members

### Recollections of the rally from Ken & Heather Haynes :-

Having given the Friday a miss, we decided to leave the Hamble, somewhat may, at 0545 on Saturday morning. Unfortunately it was still force 7 and wind over tide. We were alone in the Solent apart from four large cruise ships returning to Southampton. They didn't seem to be having any problems so we ploughed on despite being some 149,700 tons lighter and going the other way!

After setting off at 15 knots, we pulled back to 12 - 13 whilst negotiating lumpy conditions and strong breeze just off the starboard bow attempting to get to the Island shore as soon as we could, expecting to find it a bit calmer there.

From Gurnard we hugged the shore as planned but at 10 - 12 knots we still had spray and waves over the bow, the windscreen wipers being ineffective at times. These conditions prevailed as we passed Saltdean and Newtown Creek.

Approaching Hampstead Ledge buoy at 10 knots and with only 3 miles to go we thought we were over the worst but Hampstead Ledge had other ideas. Just meters from the buoy we were confronted with a wave, the likes of which I had not come across before in 50 years of sailing. The bow lifted and we "took off", being launched into the air, props exposed and engine racing. We plummeted from a great height, landed with a bang in the trough upon which the fridge opened and shot forth it's contents and the forepeak contents were were turned base over apex.

My immediate reaction was to cut all power and ride the next three of four waves at about 3 knots.

Three or four big waves later conditions improved slightly but my request to Heather to go down below and sort out the mess did not go down well! Being the devoted galley slave that she is, she duly replaced the fridge contents and re-secured the fridge door which were in the wheelhouse. However, I was told in no uncertain terms that the forepeak would have to wait.

Soon after all these events we continued at 15 knots in windy but relatively flat inshore waters before entering Yarmouth at 07:15.

In hindsight, perhaps I should have chosen to go at slack tide or even punched the tide when wind was with tide since the effect of tide is less important than what I have been used to in sailing craft. Of course one thing I have learned is not to go around Hampstead Ledge to windward whilst wind is over tide!

How should we drive a Seaward 25 through such big waves? Perhaps Barry could advise because on his website there is a photo of a 29 going "through" such a wave!!!

We were so pleased to have got to the rally, albeit one day late, which we thought was most successful thanks to David Harland. Sadly, there was not much he could do about the weather. Congratulations to others that also made it including Geoffrey from Fowey whom I am sure could write a book on his epic voyage to and from Cornwall.

Regards

Ken & Heather Haynes (Caladh - S25)

01276-24183

### Gullfoss's trip from Port Solent

We left Port Solent on Friday morning so we had a westerly wind and east flowing tide...to reduce the sea (or that was the idea)

No shelter was found even close to the Isle of Wight, the beam sea off Portsmouth Harbour en-



trance was fierce with the sea lashing the wall and the hovercraft ramp only 200m from our course up the main channel since it was lowish tide...a great view of a fearsome lee shore

We went past Cowes at about 12 to 15 knots through the water but not much over 10 over the ground and after another couple of miles felt the discomfort and potentially hazardous entrance at Yarmouth may not have been as welcoming as Cowes so we turned around and ran back at 20 knots for a couple of minutes to reach the protection of Cowes. The actual wind reports during the time we were at sea (Steven and I) were 40 knots gusting max 56 knots! Walking along the pontoons in the gusts was surreal. It wasn't the height of the waves 2m ± but the frequency...every few seconds, which was bad

We waited at East Cowes for a few hours hoping for less wind but gave up for the day. We came across to Yarmouth by taxi for drinks on Alchemy and then dinner.

We then came around to Yarmouth at about 08:00 on Saturday and washed the boat and dried out in time for Marion to arrive about 11-30 on the ferry and then off to the yacht club for lunch

Best regards

Steve

### **Geoffrey Simpson's return trip in Grand Finale**

Jeremy Towler, from the Pas de Calais (like me a past Commodore of the REME Yacht Club) and I, set off from Yarmouth at 0450 hours, just as dawn was breaking on Monday the 11th June.

A lightish wind was blowing, and although the Solent was quite flat, the Needles Channel started to knock up as I scattered some of my late wife's ashes near the Shingles Bank.

Once out into the west going tide, the sea got up and we did a fair amount of rolling about, but we made good progress and eventually we took turns to sleep while the Autopilot and the Mermaids did the work. As on our way up to the Solent, the Channel was all but deserted and apart from a frigate, one tanker in ballast and a couple of fishing boats and we had the sea to ourselves.

The tide turned against us off Portland and the crossing of Lyme Bay seemed to go on forever. However, the ebb kicked in again at Start Point and we arrived back in Fowey at 2220 hours just after the light failed. A trouble free 140 mile, 17.5 hour trip only enlivened for me off Start Point by the receipt of a phone call from my bank to tell me that my Debit card had been used in the US that morning. I was able to say that there was no way that I could have bought anything in the States as I had been at sea all day out of mobile phone contact with the world - it transpired that it was an old card which had been compromised anyway.

The post-script to the trip is that after less than an hour's running in Fowey harbour following the return from the Solent, the port engine's cam belt slipped and wrecked the cylinder head. A trawl through the Internet has revealed that cam belt problems are quite commonplace with the Ford XLD and I shall be modifying the front covers of my engines so that in future I can monitor any loss of tension in the cam belts. If my modification works, I will be happy to let other XLD Mermaid owners have details.

A super rally, brilliantly organised which Jeremy and I thoroughly enjoyed""

Kind regards,

Geoffrey