

SMACK DOCK SOUNDINGS

THE JOURNAL OF THE COLNE SMACK PRESERVATION SOCIETY



Colne Match 2021

Alberta leads the fleet to Colne Bar

©Kevin Jay

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Bringing memories to the old and lessons to the young

THE CHAIRMAN • MARTIN DOE

Extremely tired of purdah, we have hopefully all emerged safe and sound into some sun, and celebrated with the annual sail and picnic event, rather sparsely supported on a very doubtful day which nevertheless just remained dry and was much enjoyed by those who participated.

We have just completed a very successful Colne Match with a good show of boats taking part and in spite of a terribly early start, a substantial number of spectators gathered by Batemans Tower and East Mersea Stone.

This shows us how extremely popular and well supported this event remains. The West Mersea dredging match was perhaps difficult after the night before but a decent turnout of varied vessels took part.

I hope we will see a good attendance at the Annual General Meeting on Saturday November 27th at 2pm in the Brightlingsea Sailing Club.

And if I don't see you there - Happy Christmas.



Committee Members; Andy Harman, Elly Howlett, Martyn Bradfield, Max Gladley, Paul Winter, Stephen Nesbitt, Sue Last & Tom Curtis.

Editor; Elly Howlett – elly@colnesmack.co.uk

If you would prefer to receive Smack Dock Soundings via email rather than post, please provide your email address to me and we will update your preferences.

Events coming up;

October 9th – Smack Dock working party. Please contact Stephen - stephen@colnesmack.co.uk

October 9th – Tollesbury Smacks & Classics

October 23rd – Turkey Race

October 24th – Harris Rally

November 27th – CSPA AGM at 2pm at the Brightlingsea Sailing Club

All event details can be found at colnesmack.co.uk/events

Tom Curtis is now Moorings Master so if you need any information about berths, booking in, space and billing enquiries – please email tom@colnesmack.co.uk

We do have vacancies on our committee – if you have interest and knowledge in smacks, and understand our objectives - please get in touch.



SMACKDOCK NEWS

Dorana has been sold to a new home with a Maritime Trust in Eyemouth where she will undertake a complete rebuild and returned to her former glory. Over the years, many changes have happened but they are so excited about this project and we wish them all well. She will hopefully be shipped off on a low loader shortly, she is currently out of the water at Morgans awaiting transport.



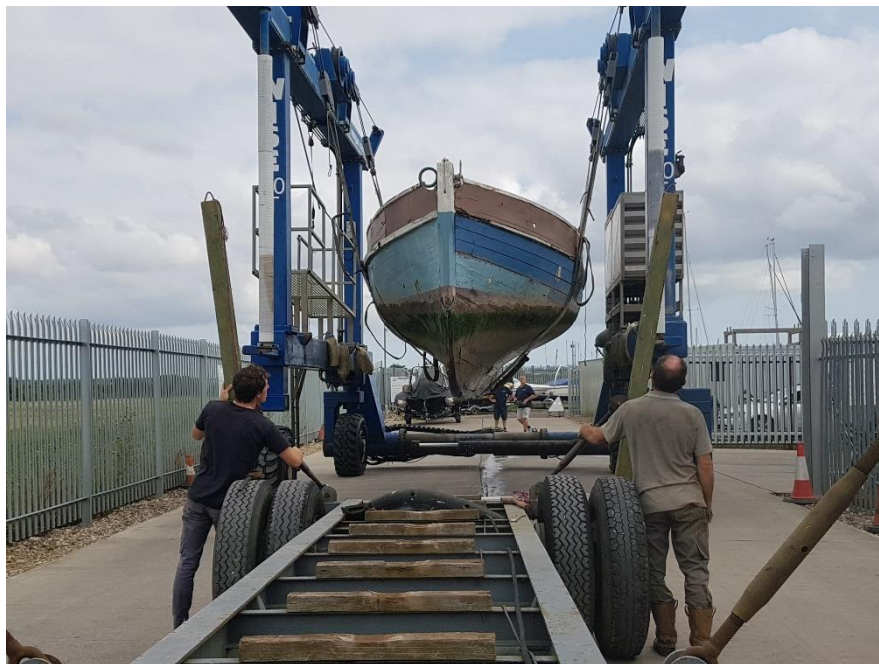
©Martyn Bradfield

My Alice is in the dock undergoing repairs by Jon Brett. Pembeth had to be shifted up to allow for her to come in and she came in on the next big tide. It took two attempts... but she is now alongside the dock and work has commenced.

Saxonia has gone back to Mersea and Jamie has started to burn off her deck paint. He is hoping to have her back to sailing condition for next years season.

Electron is for sale - she awaits patiently a new owner. Please see colnesmack.co.uk/for-sale/

We are very pleased to say that Ellen has come off the market as Andy has decided to keep her. She also has repairs booked in for Spring next year.



©Elly Howlett

Fairy has gone home to Pin Mill where Tom has started her rebuild. His dad Gus came over to Brightlingsea to give her a lift home.

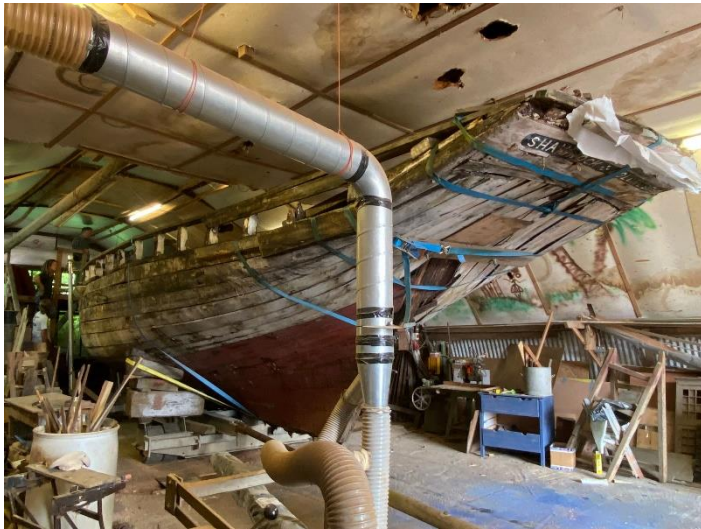
She has been gutted inside and the internal lead keel has been removed.

Varuna's sails are ready to be bent on, although there is a slight delay in the rigging but I am sure she will be a regular sight on the

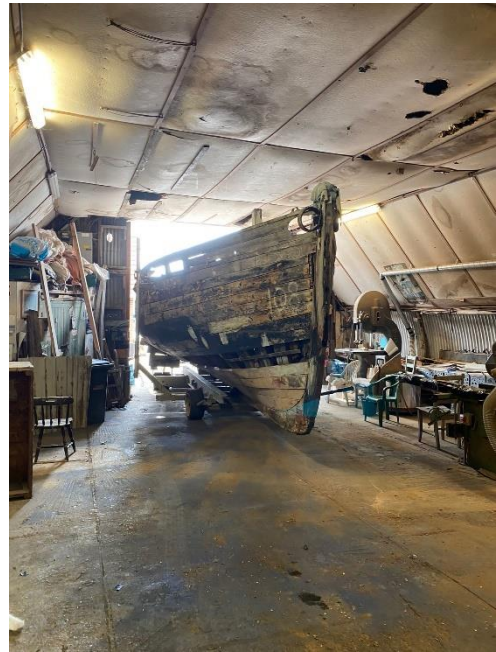
East Coast next year. Victory has had her lead removed with a view to haul her out shortly ready for her rebuild.



Shamrock has been moved from Brightlingsea to St Osyth Boatyard ready for work to commence. A tight squeeze... but she's in.



©Paul Winter



©Paul Winter

EVENTS

Blessing of the Waters was cancelled due to you know what..... so next year will just have to be bigger and better. There is nothing quite like a vicar who enjoys a good water fight.....!!

OGA East Coast Race went ahead with 18 boats taking part. Gladys, Puritan, Maria, Transcur & My Alice were among the gaffer fleet. Maria won the fast class with Puritan winning the slow- although I am not sure she will stay in that class for long!

Although a much smaller gathering this year it had some surprising results due to flukey winds and occasional rain.



©Sandy Miller

Blackwater Match had the best weather with blue skies, a hot sun and a cooling breeze. A fantastic turnout with five smacks and ten barges. The staysail class on the barges had an amazingly close start. The light airs meant it was a slow but enjoyable race nonetheless. First smack was Peace, followed by Alberta then Lizzie Annie taking third.

Brightlingsea Regatta was packed full of fun and plenty of events to keep everyone amused. My Alice took prime position to invade with their very own pirates and they even made someone walk the plank!



©Sandy Miller



©Sandy Miller

© Paul Winter



Sail & Picnic was almost a washout with heavy rain and bad weather forecast, luckily for the optimistic sailors among us, the sun shone, the breeze was perfect and the company was fabulous too. Only Maria & Priscilla went out, with guests



© Roger Tabor

aboard both smacks. No stopping for a picnic, as the weather was just too nice so after a quick chat between skippers, we decided to continue to sail and enjoy a beautiful summers day. We didn't sail far, just up and down the Colne enjoying the various water craft – all probably grateful that it wasn't raining cats and dogs! If you would like to come aboard next year, let us know. The more the merrier!

Swale Match has not gone ahead for two years now due to weather – but this year the weather looked fantastic. The day before the match and the week leading to it..... awful. F7-8 was supposed to be easing late afternoon on the Friday, but the tides were against anyone travelling from the East Coast. So, after much chitter chatter, Priscilla decided to poke her nose out of the Colne and see what it was like. It was great heading out of the river. She had a bone in her teeth and was flying along. As we got past the Colne Bar – very pleasant. Almost uncomfortably pleasant as we flew along to the Spitway buoys on a broad reach. Then, as luck would have it, once through the Spitway, a big lumpy sea and wind which only seemed to be getting stronger... only lead us to believe that we should all become weather forecasters as not one of them was right. The wind had come right round meaning it was now on the nose, into pretty big seas. After quite some time, we decided that enough was enough. So, we turned back.



©Elly Howlett

We were in Pyefleet creek by 4am. A few gins later and a lot of laughing... we decided to turn in. Up early to get the tide the next day, we decided to head to the Swale even if we just made it in time for the party.

What a difference a day makes. Blue skies, calm seas... very tired crew.

However, when turning up the Swale, a black wall of weather welcomed us – it looked very dark. Skipper decided to get the gear down as it didn't look entirely pleasant, and we noted a small dinghy heading straight towards it. Just as the crew managed to get the main down – it hit us. A good F7/8 squall and a ton of water from above. We couldn't see the dinghy. We actually couldn't see anything. Just then, over the radio, we heard something. The words we all dread – a mayday. It was that dinghy. They managed to tuck a reef in before the squall hit

and Rachel was pointing to where we had last seen them. They had lost someone over the side. Tom offered assistance and we headed over to their last known position. Luckily, after about 10 minutes, the RNLI got them out of the water and the other person in the dinghy sailed it back to Whitstable. Then out came the sun.

It looked like the last twenty minutes had never happened, the only evidence of this squall was four extremely dripping wet crew members – one of which had just done their make up and brushed their hair ready for shoreside events. Well, what a waste of time that was!

Arriving in time for a deliciously cooked hog roast, with beer, music, friends and laughter – it felt so very normal. And so very well needed.

Only two smacks managed to enter the Swale – Emmeline and William & Mary. So had we have got there, on time, we might have got third!

Ah well... until next year!



©Sandy Miller

Mersea Week was enjoyed by those who attended, weather was its usual self with a day being cancelled and then having two races in one day – which seems to be an annual thing!

Pin Mill Match postponed until next year – a great one to attend but often confused with the Pin Mill Barge Match – perhaps they should combine the two!



©Stuart Cock



Mersea Regatta excelled themselves with the firework display this year. A big turnout - for probably - the islands biggest day event of the calendar.

Thoroughly enjoyed by all who enter – lets hope they can tag it back onto the end of Mersea Week next year.

COLNE MATCH

After a clean start all the barges were close crossing the line with Repertor leading the fleet to the Colne Bar. Niagara, Blue Mermaid to windward and Marjorie to leeward all close on her tail.



©Kevin Jay

On the run down to the Clacton Pier mark, Niagara took the lead before both Marjorie and Blue Mermaid then managing to slip past Repertor. The barges had split into two packs - both hotly contested. Niagara and Blue Mermaid tacked again shortly after the Clacton mark while Marjorie and Repertor held the same line before tacking up to the Wallet Spitway. Coming up to the mark Niagara and Blue Mermaid attempt to outmanoeuvre each other, Marjorie who was on cracking form put a long tack in and was first round the mark, Niagara, Blue Mermaid and



©Seamus Masters



Repertor, in hot pursuit. While Marjorie kept building her lead, Blue Mermaid pulled away from Repertor and got past Niagara. It was a close call for 3rd for a while but Niagara managed to hold off Repertor and the space between the leading four barges lead to a dignified finish. Marjorie crossed the line first overall with Blue Mermaid in second and Niagara in third overall and first staysail barge followed by Repertor.

Barge results;

- 1st Marjorie – CSPA Barge Cup
- 2nd Blue Mermaid – Sailorman Cup
- 3rd Niagara – Prior Barge Cup
- 4th Repertor – Weston Cup
- 5th Reminder
- 6th Cambria
- 7th Thalatta
- 8th Centaur

1st over the line Blue Mermaid - the Golden Cockerel

Thank you to Tom Moody for your report from the front!



©Sandy Miller



©Sandy Miller



The smacks got off to a flying start with Charlotte Ellen being first over the line and then Alberta taking an early lead. As they headed out the Colne to the bar buoy, there were many position changes with Sunbeam storming up the middle of the fleet. Our Boys managed to start half an hour after the start after having a slight issue getting going, but was bringing up the rear with Marigold and Pioneer. Kate managed to get ahead once they had caught up with the barges and it was looking like she wouldn't be overtaken, she found her groove and was hard to



©Sandy Miller



©Sandy Miller

catch. Mid fleet Pioneer had now caught up as she was hanging every sail she possibly could but was told she had touched another smacks pole. She was made to do a 360 turn despite no one onboard seeing it happen, but the skipper made the decision to turn. Priscilla was coming up to the Clacton Pier mark but a barge had left no room for them so they also did a 360 to avoid a collision, which then meant Gracie snuck through ahead of them. As Pioneer caught up, they sailed to leeward of Priscilla until the Spitway buoy.

By this point, the leading smacks were a mere pin prick in the distance. A few tacks later and everyone was heading back up the Colne where Pioneer eventually undertook Priscilla and made good ground on Gracie.

Alberta managed to get to the front and take 1st place, with Kate being 2nd and Maria 3rd.

Smack results;

1st – Alberta

Cock of the Colne

King Colne Cup

Skippers Trophy

Cock of the Colne

Bob Harman Memorial Trophy – Fastest elapsed time Class 1&2

2nd Kate – Arthur Bowles Cup

3rd Maria – Xanthe Trophy

4th Sunbeam



©Sandy Miller



©Seamus Masters



- 5th Charlotte Ellen
- 6th Gracie – Percival & Webb Cup 1st smack under 36ft
- 7th Pioneer
- 8th Priscilla – Jim Spencer cup 2nd smack under 36ft
- 9th Marigold – Rose Bowl 1st Bawley
- 10th Our Boys – Vernon Scott trophy for last smack home

Mary Amelia did not complete the course.

Gladys had intended to race but decided breakfast on Brightlingsea spit was much more appealing.

A great turn out for the MFOB fleet this year with Winnie, Jack, Gipsy, Florrie May, Mystery and Faith all taking part and Spray doing the course but not entering.

Both Winnie and Jack had a great start while Gipsy and Mystery were over the line so had to go round again.

It wasn't long before Gipsy, Spray, Florrie May and Mystery soon picked up the pace heading towards the inner bench head and soon overtook Winnie, Faith and Jack.



©Seamus Masters

©Seamus Masters



As the race went on the bigger boats managed to stretch out their lead with Gipsy leading the fleet to the finish line to win the line honours trophy.

The overall handicap results were very close with the top four boats finishing within 45 seconds of another.

- 1st Winnie CK98 - Simon Jacklin
- 2nd Gipsy CK79 - Gerard Swift
- 3rd Mystery CK59 - Tom Bowman

After the race the bumkins all gathered at East Mersea Point for a picnic and a few drinks before heading back to West Mersea.



©Seamus Masters

All of the crews had a very enjoyable race and would like to thank the Colne Match organisers for inviting them over and are very much looking forward to returning next year.

Thanks to Mark for his report! Great to have you join us – looking forward to next year!



©Seamus Masters



©Mark Farthing

MERSEA DREDGING MATCH



©Sandy Miller

What a fantastic event. Extremely well organised, helpful hints and tips from the crew boat and other smacks and some lovely prizes to be won at the packing shed raffle! The highlight was seeing Harriet back out to play again, as well as the gorgeous weather and seeing what these boats do best – dredging!

A variety of work boats took part, all with different

methods but when it got to the weighing at the end... it turns out there was quite a difference between the experienced and the rookies!

Well done to all who came, dredged, washed oysters, cleaned the decks, scrubbed, scrubbed some more, and still went home covered in mud. Until next year!



©Sandy Miller



©Elly Howlett

NEWS



©Sandy Miller

Sandy Miller

Tom handed over the beautiful clinker dinghy to owner Denis who has the beautiful bawley Doris! One very happy owner!



A sailing smack ran aground while trying to navigate the proposed restricted channel.

You may have seen or heard of the new expansion plans at Morgans, Edme & Harriet demonstrated how far the pontoons would encroach onto the fairway and poor old Harriet even landed herself in the mud trying to tack past. A great visual for those who aren't local or not familiar with the impact of the proposed development.



©Raybel Charters

Tiller & Wheel hosted a fantastic event on the Medway trying to encourage more action on the Medway. Lots of events planned for the future – for more details visit tillerandwheel.com