



1. MYA STUFF

Please send any comments, questions or suggestions to the Editor at newsletter-editor@mya-uk.org.uk

NEWS SNIPPETS

Funding for your District - Use it!

Each of the six MYA Districts has a fund to allow clubs within that District to develop and expand their operations - and every year these funds are underspent! Each proposal for such funding needs to convince the District Councillor (to whom application should be made) that the money will benefit both the club concerned and that District - as well as the MYA more generally. So, if your club requires such support, please contact your District Councillor - and a rumour is about that these amounts are to be increased.

Newsletter layout

The layout of this edition was changed in response to a suggestion on the Forum that we should avoid the more elegant two-column layout (harder to read apparently on mobile devices esp. phones), so last time it was a single column/full page format. It is planned to keep the layout fairly constant so this edition will stay with the full page layout for now. Failure to write in saying how wonderful this layout is will probably result in it reverting to the two-column layout.

Keep your membership details up to date

The Members section of the MYA website is a mine of useful information but, like many things, it is only as good as the data put into it and then maintained.

So, **please ensure that the data for your membership as shown is accurate** as, if it is not, contact with you is both more difficult to achieve and often more costly in time and money. Please keep your details up to date. If you have any problems doing so, please contact the Digital Communication Officer (Austin Guerrier). *Thank you.*



MYA Chair - The View from the Bridge

With events now in full swing and Championships taking place nearly every weekend we are all being kept busy and on our toes.

The recent IOM National Championships hosted by our Fleetwood club was almost a total sell out and the event race team, organisers and helpers put on an amazing show. The weather was near perfect and the race team managed to set courses to test all abilities whilst the volunteer helpers kept us fed and watered. Congratulations to everyone involved and there is a full report and pictures to be found elsewhere in the e-Quaint and on the IOM website.



John Owens, the Scottish District Councillor, has stepped down from the role and, as yet, no one has volunteered to represent the members in that district on a permanent basis however the SD committee have been invited to put forward a member to attend the next council meeting and make the SD members voice heard.

The MYA AGM takes place at the end of November 2021 and nominations for officer positions are now requested through your club contact. All officer positions are available for new nominations as well as for existing officers to seek re election. The Secretary to Council, Jen Hand, has already announced that she will be stepping down at the AGM - although she has agreed to continue to compile the 2022 yearbook in time for publication. Jen has been an absolute diamond over the last three years and I will miss her greatly. In addition to the position of Secretary to Council there is currently no Vice-Chair or Publicity Officer. If you have skills to offer and would like to give a little back to your sport then speak to your club contact and get your nomination in.

Phil Holliday
MYA Chair

Getting prepared for the colder months...



SITUATIONS VACANT

As many members will know there were three key Officer posts unfilled on the MYA Council but in the last couple of months, this has improved a bit. The posts of Vice Chair and Publicity Officer still remain to be filled however. These are crucial to the efficient and effective operation of the MYA on behalf of its members, so the help of all readers is sought to identify people who could do these most enjoyable and key jobs. The job names are fairly self-explanatory but further details of what they entail can be obtained by contacting the MYA Chair, Phil Holliday.

Please consider volunteering for these roles as they add hugely to the ability of the whole organisation to function properly - and you will enjoy them.

Sadly, one of our Districts (Scotland) is now without a District Councillor as John Owens has resigned after many years of valuable service - for which all at the MYA thank him most warmly with hopes that he enjoys his well earned (MYA) retirement and, of course, his sailing.

Thank you.



THE MYA PHOTO COMPETITION

There is a competition running which is designed to encourage members to submit their favourite photos and try to win the £50 per edition prize - with a much bigger set of prizes (£100 first prize etc) in the annual post-AGM edition in November/December each year. The panel of Judges has now pondered for the second time and the winner is Tony Schlaepi, who has concentrated on vintage boat theme and captured a gathering of these lovely boats at Frensham in mid July. Everyone enjoyed the day as can be seen from the photo itself.



Tony Schlaepi's winning picture of vintage boats at Frensham

Please keep sending in your best pix as the one judged to be the most interesting, active and well constructed - and submitted before the AGM - will receive the **£100** prize, with a **£50** second prize and a **£25** third prize. So, please polish your lenses and file the pix on the MYA website.

RACING OFFICER NEWS

As mentioned above, this vacant post was filled recently by Lester Gilbert. Here are some words written by him to introduce himself plus some initial thoughts on how Racing things are likely to develop now that COVID is departing (slowly).

I started radio sailing with a Marblehead in the early 1970s, continued more recently in the IOM class, enjoyed some vane sailing with an A Class and a 36", and now sails a Ten Rater and a 6M in addition. I have published some technical web pages and spreadsheets on www.onemetre.net and am an occasional columnist for the American MYA publication, "Model Yachting". I set up the IOM International Class Association in the early 2000s and served three terms as IOMICA Chair, more recently serving two terms as IRSA Chair in the 2010s. I have previously qualified with the RYA as a National Judge and a Regional Race Officer.

Now to give you some idea of what I'm working on currently.....

The MYA Council co-opted me as Racing Officer in June 2021 after the position had been vacant since November 2020. I am an enthusiastic supporter of class-led processes and have formed a Racing Team comprised of the 10 Class Captains or their nominees to progress national racing matters for the 13 affiliated and adopted MYA Classes.

The unprecedented pandemic has, not surprisingly, revealed faults in our racing documents and procedures around issues of event cancellation and restriction, and the consequent fairness of outcomes for those entered, those who would have entered, and those denied or prevented entry. The various regulations will be updated over the next several months, and sailors with a point of view are asked to talk to their class captains so that discussion within the Racing Team can be informed by class owner opinion.

The 2022 Racing Calendar is currently in progress. Almost all the major event dates - national championships and ranking events - have been allocated, and the Districts, Clubs, and Classes are now being asked to agree dates for their other open events. When finalised, the calendar will be published, hopefully, by mid-September 2021.

For the remainder of 2021, the events as currently listed in the 2021 calendar are expected to take place, other factors permitting. In particular, we had/have the Marblehead and IOM National Championships in August, the DF65, RG65, and DF95 National Championships in September, the 10R, A Class, and 6M National Championships in October, and the 36" National Championships in November. A number of events that were earlier cancelled or postponed have been added or rescheduled, and the remaining months of 2021 look amazingly well populated with exciting racing events.

Two 10R yachts of widely different generations showing how the shapes have changed over time.



2. CLUBS

The two Clubs in the spotlight in this edition are **Ripon Sailing Club and Buchaness - together with another bonus club (Chipstead)**

Firstly, we have Ripon SC

Ripon Sailing Club was formed by a group of enthusiasts from the Ripon area in 1957, sailing initially on the River Ure at Langthorpe, near Boroughbridge. Construction of the A1 around Boroughbridge including an embankment and bridge over the river to the West of the clubhouse not only restricted the wind flow but also reduced the available sailing area significantly.

The club moved to Farnham Lake near Knaresborough in 1972 where it has been ever since. The former gravel quarry has now become a haven for wildlife and the well established home of Ripon SC. The club has produced a number of national and world class dinghy helms including a few world champions, not bad for a small inland puddle! The original wooden hut clubhouse was replaced over the winter of 1985/86 with a substantial purpose built brick one, opened in August 1986 by a former Commodore and long standing member, Dr Bill Jones.

Celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2017, the club still upholds the values of its founding members and its history. The club has worked hard to attract grant funding from a number of bodies including Sport England, using the funds to improve the clubhouse and to bring the facilities up to date whilst also making them fully accessible to all. The club was selected as winner of the RYA NE region club of the year in 2020.

The most recent addition to our facilities was the construction of a large balcony that overlooks the lake and provides an elevated control area for RC yacht racing, even though its intended purpose was to enhance the social aspects of the club.

More recently a small group of RC helms have constructed a fixed platform that provides access for launching yachts into water deep enough for an IOM keel to avoid grounding.

The club had a brief relationship with the MYA Northern District (ND) in the early 90's when a few members raced IOM's at Claro Marine Modellers on Scargill Reservoir, a place that was not well suited to hosting an open event due to the absence of any facilities! Ripon SC stepped in and offered to host a round of the ND IOM winter series which it did for a couple of years.

More recently the arrival of the Dragon Force 65 saw a revival of RC yachting at the club as a few members got together to form our DF65 fleet, initially just racing on Wednesday evenings to pass the time between Wednesday afternoon and Wednesday evening dinghy racing.

Little did we know how addictive these little yachts would become. The initial plans to keep ownership costs down by allowing only the A & B rigs worked for a while but eventually the A+ was also approved for racing as helms began to race at other local clubs. It is often very windy during the winter months but the C rig has never been required, the irregular shape of the lake means we can always find a sheltered area to continue racing in.

As the summer ended and light evenings became a distant memory DF65 racing took place on Wednesday mornings through the winter to April when Wednesday afternoon racing starts again.

Along the way we have increased numbers to include both former dinghy helms and newcomers to the sport, adding support to the argument that the DF65 was an inspirational idea pulling new people into the sport.

We now have a very competitive but friendly fleet that sees a strong fleet racing regularly throughout the year with as many as 15 boats racing at the height of the season.

.../cont



Ripon SC .../cont

We held our first "Pop Up" Open meeting on Good Friday (one of the only dates available in the very busy club calendar) in 2016. It was well attended by DF65 helms from around the area and we are now looking forward to 2022 when we hope that we will once again be able to welcome visitors to the club for this popular event. We also try to hold a Christmas special Open event if the lake isn't frozen over!

As the DF65 helms wanted more competition a number of them began to travel to Askern Lake for their winter series, a few also joined the Askern club allowing them to get more than one weekly fix of DF65 racing, of these helms a few have also taken the plunge and bought into IOM yachts to the point where we now have a strong IOM fleet of our own with over a dozen helms sailing regularly.

We race DF65 on Wednesday mornings and IOM on Friday mornings, the very busy dinghy racing and training calendar means that most of our activity is confined to mid week which makes hosting summer weekend open events very difficult. Being part of a dinghy club does mean that we have access to power boats so that we can set courses to suit the days wind direction rather than having to make do with fixed marks and a compromised course.

The courses we set are usually straightforward windward leeward or triangle and sausage so remembering the course is simple even for those of us with ever reducing brain cells. The number of rounds sailed usually produces races of around 10 minutes duration so we are able to sail up to 12 races over the course of a morning. We try to avoid "faffing" between races although before Covid we always enjoyed a coffee and cake break so there was time then for some of the more lengthy fine adjustments that are sometimes needed.

Our ethos is one of providing a morning's sport with a good social aspect and strong dose of humour. During the Covid era we managed to maintain social distancing by introducing a set of numbered wooden blocks to designate a helms control position, moving one place right at the end of each race so that everyone had a view of the start line, windward or leeward mark at some point during the session.

There is nothing like keeping helms confined to a single position to test their sailing skills and eyesight! For the most part helms have a good understanding of the rules, minor infringements arise from time to time but in the main we are a well behaved bunch who enjoy the racing and accompanying banter.

To keep members informed we use a mix of social media, a GDPR resilient mailing list and WhatsApp, the occasional mailshots provide reminders about our events and club activity whilst WhatsApp is used for last minute change of plan notices and updates, as well as post race results distribution, Social media records our activity and provides a communication conduit with other local clubs. The RC yacht section has its own webpages to showcase our activity as well as providing a home for our racing results.



Sailing at Ripon

.....and now Buchanness, NE Scotland

BUCHANNESS RADIO YACHT CLUB

The BRYC is situated at the top of a hill on the outskirts of Peterhead in northeast Scotland - home of the biggest white fish fleet in the UK. There has been building and sailing model of Fifie yachts there since the middle of the 19th century. These yachts were sailing models of the Fifie herring drifter which chased the shoals of herring around our coasts. This is a subject in its own right and far too big to go into - but suffice to say there is a rich history to be told.

The first Buchanness Model Yacht Club was formed about or before 1900 and has come and gone many times since then. It was, as far as I know, very active in the 1950s with yachts ranging from 2 feet to 6 feet in hull length bowsprits excluded. These were raced and timed on the beat with a skipper and mate then broad reached. There are about three guys still building these yachts but serious competition forces changes to design, and not always for the better.

They sailed these boats at the Den Dam, a man-made reservoir first built around 1737 - then re-engineered probably around the early 1900s when the harbour of refuge was being built with convict labour.

All the information I have of the early days of the club came from the member who joined us at the start of our journey who learned about the Fifies from men who went in them. This was in the WW2 years and some were in their nineties. Sad to say Jim passed away a few years ago - but not before he committed all he knew (which was enormous) to paper and this along with a beautiful model of a sailing Fifie which is now in Peterhead museum. He was a wonderful person and sadly missed and he was also a faithful lifeboat man.

The present club was formed after a holiday visit by a few of us to Fleetwood about 1983 and the club restarted about 1984 after a visit to Edinburgh and a meeting with Robert Brown. We were only interested in radio yachts but a very enthusiastic Fifie builder and sailor convinced us to start formal racing of these beautiful yachts and we still do to this day.

Since the restart of the club our members have travelled all over the UK sailing in National championships, ranking races both Marblehead and IOMs. We have sailed in European and World championships both Marblehead and IOMs and of course around Scotland at various club open events. These last few years we have taken to the DF65 yachts which prove to be great little yachts, meet all our expectations and bring in new members who otherwise may pass by. Membership is around 17 which moves up and down.

Going forward we just want more of the same - along with a good community spirit.

Cathy Reid



Buchanness members

A Bonus Club this time round - Chipstead

CHIPSTEAD SC - RADIO SAILING

The Radio Sailing class was formed as part of Chipstead SC in February 2015 with an initial membership of approximately 15 - many of which transferred from the Swanley Model Yacht Club which was in the process of closing due to their lake silting up. The club originally started as Danson Model Yacht Club, a lake in Bexleyheath Kent.

Since the transfer to Chipstead SC the number of members has doubled, continuing its membership of the MYA. Within our club we have some sailors who regularly race in UK open events and have also sailed in European and World Championships as part of the UK team.

The lake at Chipstead SC is a large open water with trees on the northern side, so we allow sailing almost parallel to the lake bank giving a good area for controlling your boat, which has three launching jetties. The pictures below shows sailing at Chipstead SC Lake. The club house includes a bar, kitchen, changing rooms and adequate parking. As a club we sail two types of model yachts, the International One Metre (IOM) and Dragon Flite (DF95)

Our Club racing programme consists of Dragon Flites on Monday mornings and IOM's on Wednesday mornings with Fridays being an open class day with a short stop for lunch and concluding in the afternoon. All classes of yachts are welcome to come along and either race informally or use as a tune up day.

As a Radio Sailing Club we sail all year round (weather permitting) having four different series for each class, Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. During the Winter we also run a number of Open Meetings when sailors from all over the UK come to compete for Trophies including a position in the Met & Southern area class standings. In addition we have four club trophy races and an award for most improved sailor in each fleet of our quarterly series.

At the present time due to Covid 19 we are not running regular club competitions but informal racing takes place around fixed buoys depending on who feels safe to sail. Hopefully this will end in the spring and club sailing will be back to normal.

If you are interested in becoming a member please **COME ALONG AND HAVE A GO.**



Sailing at Chipstead



.....and now for something completely different.

Many of you will know Derek Barratt (Solent MCRYC) but you may not know that he served as a Watch Officer on the Sail Training ship Sir Winston Churchill for twelve years and he wrote a series of four articles for Poole MSC some years ago.

This describes things that are not quite the same as we do but it may be of interest to MYA members who, by now, might still be looking for something different to relieve the boredom. This is No 2 of the Series (of 25! lol) - and you are warned that it does get a bit nerve-jangling towards the end! *Read on....*

THE TALES FROM THE TALL'UNS - Chapter 2

I used to be a Watch Officer with the Sail Training Association. They operated the two tall ships the Sir Winston Churchill and the Malcolm Millar - the latter sadly no longer being with us. They were getting very expensive to maintain to the required Board of Trade requirements. I served in this position for about ten years and I thought you might like to read the tale of when I got to tack the ship for the first time.

Now you all know how to do it don't you. You simply move a lever with your right (or is it left?!) thumb. The whole manoeuvre, from one tack to the other takes less than three seconds. As you can no doubt imagine, what follows is going to be a little different.

There were 55 people on board; most of them divided into three watches. Each had one Officer, one Watch Leader, and 13 trainees. The remainder were comprised of The Captain, First Mate, Navigator, Chief Engineer, Bosun and Cook; the last two had their own assistants, and there was also a Purser and a Supernumerary. This last position was usually held by someone who was an experienced Watch Officer who could turn his hand to most things on the ship but who was now too old to do that job. He provides a back up as they have had Officers fall out of the rigging!

One of the jokes often bandied about was "The food is very good and you get plenty of it. Six meals a day; three down and three up"!

It took a minimum of two watches to tack the ship, sometimes the third watch was needed if there was a wrong combination of sails up. The sails in question were the "between mast staysails", usually referred to as "The Tweenies" They had to be handed before we could put about, and once on deck, packed and stowed in the Lazarette. There was usually too much going on to leave them lying around. They were never set at night and if we had to go about during that time we always tried to do it during any watch change.

There were three masts, the fore, main and mizzen. The fore and main were gaff rigged and the mizzen was Bermudan. The gaff rig was chosen in order to reduce the size of each sail. It is not possible for one watch to hoist the mizzen up in one go. When it is about eighty per cent of the way up you had to switch to a block and tackle system and there wasn't enough room on deck to get more trainees pulling. It's not like a Tug of War where you hold with your arms and push with your legs. If we did that, we would soon be losing them over the side! They had to stand still and pull with their arms. So why make it Bermudan?

The reason was that it did most of the work; it was the most efficient of all the sails on board. So when tacking, the fore, main and mizzen sails took care of themselves but the rest very definitely did not. There were three jibs, the larger outer two set on a bowsprit. The smaller inner one, known as the inner staysail, should take care of itself but never did. The traveller was supposed to travel along something that looked like a bit of old railway line mounted transversely across the deck. It became the Watch Leader's job to deliver a hefty kick at the appropriate time! The two outer jibs were handled by block and tackle. When the sails were set and drawing, these blocks were at head height and were flying around all over the place during the tack. They were almost the same size as your head. Health and Safety would have had a fit if they had seen it!



THE TALES FROM THE TALL'UNS - .../cont

Take my word for it; you very definitely did not want to be hit by one! There was another foresail called a flying jib and was the only one to be handled by a winch. They could all have been of course, but these were sail training ships, and just in case there were any bodies with nothing to do, there were six sets of running back stays, two to each mast. Again totally unnecessary as any masts less likely to fall down I have never seen!

So that's the fore and aft sails dealt with, nine in all. The fore mast also carries two yards on which could be set a triangular sail at the top called a raffee. Below that, in between the yards, was the square topsail - and attached to the lower yard was the fore course. This was the biggest sail carried and was never handed. It stayed permanently attached to its yard, as did the square topsail to the upper yard. The raffee was both set and handed from the deck. These sails were not used when going to windward although the yards were braced accordingly to reduce the windage, which was considerable.

Just as a matter of interest, next time you are on a ship that is setting course for somewhere or other, you now know that this saying comes from a sailing ship that is setting out for somewhere a long way away. A sail of this size was never set for local journeys; it was far too much trouble sending crew aloft to stow it. And you might also like to know that the Tea Clippers and other similar sized sailing ships changed all their sails when they reached the Tropics (Cancer or Capricorn) for older ones that would not be so badly degraded by the sun, and did it all again when they reached the other one! The whole process was carried out using a deck-mounted capstan and took at least a week on each occasion! There was a set order to do all this otherwise the ship became unmanageable and overrode the rudder.

Whilst I was serving on the ships it was suddenly realised that if you wanted to get a Masters Certificate for square riggers, there was only one person left in the world qualified to carry out the examination - and he lived in Australia! The problem has since been put right.

Sorry. I got a bit carried away, where was I? Oh yes, tacking the ship. So we've done the crew and the sails and what's next? Well there's the keel, she has a long keel. Not downwards but lengthwise, and she doesn't want to change direction. You need to be going at least six knots and even then there is no guarantee that she will go through the wind! (I also sailed on the ship that starred in The Onedin Line and you had to lower all the jibs before you were able to tack). Sometimes if it was really windy, the only way to get on the other tack was to wear her. In other words instead of tacking, bear away, gybe and come up on the other tack that way. It needs a lot of room and can take a long time!

So there I was, my first time as a Watch Officer. Fortunately it was standard practice to put an inexperienced Watch Officer with two very experienced ones as there is an awful lot to learn but there is a book on board with all the information in it that I would require to do the job. It was about an inch thick, would take about a week to read, and there never seemed to be time to more than occasionally glance at it, and I was told that it was the revised simpler version! This was the second day out and it was blowing about a force five. Everyone had been assembled on deck for some tacking practice. Suddenly the Captain looked at me and said "Mr. Barratt, prepare to go about". Me? He can't mean me - but he did!

So let me describe the scene. On the bridge were The Captain, First Mate, Chief Engineer and three Watch Officers. There was also a Helmsman, the Supernumerary, two lookouts and a scribe (ships log, for the filling in of). Being a sailing ship you can't see very much from the bridge as only your head pokes out, so if you are running things you need to climb on to the coachroof. This is a fairly big but very cluttered area. You need to keep your wits about you as there is nothing soft to bump into.

Had I given some thought to it, I should have been wondering why the chief was there, but all my thinking processes seemed to have stopped working. I climbed up on to the coachroof, went forward to where I could see most of the trainees and shouted "Stand by to tack the ship".



THE TALES FROM THE TALL'UNS - .../cont

At this stage I should explain that it is necessary to shout. Big sailing ships can be noisy places, and sometimes you can't actually see the people you are giving orders to. But people are not used to being shouted at; they associate it with having done something wrong. The other problem is that when you shout your voice changes, so people have to get used to the different sound. What came out didn't sound right and fortunately was carried aft by the wind. I cupped my hands round my mouth and tried again. A little better but not much. So, brain not working and voice gone, a good start! What's next? Ships speed, six knots, I must have at least six knots. I called to the Super to call it out every ten seconds. That was ridiculous, every ten minutes would have been better as nothing happens quickly on a large sailing ship. Come on Derek, get it right. Five and a half knots; not enough. Bear away a bit. Not too much as, with everyone stationed at their various posts, there's no one left to ease the sheets. Ten degrees would have to do. "Helmsman, what's your head"? No answer, he obviously didn't understand, I should have realised this, it was only our second day out and in all probability his first time on the helm.

I saw the Super moving towards him. "Helmsman, starboard ten", Come on man, repeat the order, let me know that you've heard it and understood. He starts to swing the wheel and gets stopped. "Starboard ten" That's better, now swing it and tell me when you've done it. "Starboard ten on Sir, "Good, acknowledge that he heard it properly and did the right thing. "Starboard ten on, aye aye." (You've got the idea of this, so I'll cut what's said down from now on). "Midships". "Midships on Sir" "Aye, aye". Now wait, will she speed up?

"Six knots, Mr. Barratt", "Thank you, Super". Now what? Go over to the starboard side and shout "Hook on the starboard running back stays" Stay there and, as their particular Watch Leader is somewhere else, watch that the six people concerned are doing it properly. Good; go back to the bridge, "Port ten," "Port ten on, Sir, "Aye, aye". Here we go. If you put too much rudder on too quickly it acts as a brake and slows her down. But she's not turning fast enough. "Port twenty" "Port twenty on, Sir" "Aye, aye". She slowly comes up and suddenly there's a big wave coming, If it hits the bow on the wrong side it will knock her back. It arrives just too late and helps us round, and through the wind she goes! Dash forward and shout "Let draw for'ard" Fourteen trainees swing into action to handle the jibs. The running back stays, don't forget them. Go to the port side and shout "Let go the port running backstays". Now get over to the starboard side, "Make up the starboard running back stays." What's left? Come on Derek, think.. We're still turning, "Midships" "Midships on, Sir", "Aye, aye". The yards, brace the yards. "Let go the starboard yard braces," Get to the other side," Brace the yards to port", they start to swing round; I've done it, I've bloody done it!

She slowly bears away and the sails take up on the new tack. She starts to lean the other way. I thought she wouldn't go through the wind, but she did. I remembered afterwards getting a lung full of diesel exhaust from the silencers on the coachroof. Did I get some help? Was that why The Chief was there? I must admit that I wasn't thinking too much about things like that at the time. But I'd done it! Suddenly I was two inches taller! I was about to start strutting when there was a shout from immediately below me, followed by an almighty crash.

It was approaching lunch time and the Cook had piled up all the plates against a fore and aft bulkhead in the galley, ready to start dishing out, and I had forgotten to send a runner to advise him that we were about to tack the ship! It took a long time to live it down.

Derek Barratt



3. CLASSES

BEHIND THE SCENES - FLEETWOOD 2021 IOM NATIONALS (28-30 AUGUST)

Introduction

It is said that “necessity is the mother of invention” and that invention is an enduring trait of the British culture. So, how do you set about ‘broadcasting’ an event without a 120 person production team, a satellite upload link, no internet connection and a £million budget?

The answer is thanks (in no particular order of importance) to the power of mobile phone ‘hotspot’ technology, 4G, Notebooks and Laptop computers, a bit of HDMI wire, Damian Ackroyd and Jonathan Blake, Google, Microsoft and DSLR cameras.



CLASSES

Two Months Earlier (that is early July 2021)

During one of those random conversations I have from time to time with Graham Elliott we created a nice to have wish list of what would be needed at the Nationals, to feed the results-hungry audience around the world.

And you guessed it - it went something like the phone equivalent of propping up a bar late at night, the mind freed from the stresses of day-to-day life, designed to create all kinds of wonderful ideas. The following morning, looking at the list, I thought <expletives> how on earth are we going to do this on a budget of £0?

We need the website to show video feeds, results (usually required before the race has finished), pictures of the event as it happens or near enough, letting the worldwide IOM audience know about the resource, twitter feeds facebook blah blah. OMG this wasn't in the job description.....

One month Later (end July)

The mind is a wonderful thing. When I was young, I recall reading a book called "The Creative Manager" (it may still be in circulation) written by some clever psychotherapist who claimed that sleeping on a problem was the equivalent of the brain incubating one, or maybe more solution(s) to the problem.

Now I experience this quite often - however I have noticed and come to rely on the time to incubate solution taking days, in this case many. Bouncing ideas off Jonathan Blake about how we can encourage the website to do stuff it wasn't planning on doing without money being thrown at it or resorting to code writing - at which neither of us is very accomplished - led us to discover various options some of which worked and some of which were abject failures.

Hmmm, what next???

Vane A Championships

What do they have to do with IOM's? not a lot on the face of it, but I had had the unbeknown foresight to volunteer for duty, as being a member at Gosport it seemed like the right thing to do. And *Bingo*.... who should I meet but the two people who represented the final pieces in the jigsaw puzzle - Derek Priestly the fixer (no disrespect) and Damian Ackroyd the creative brain behind the final layout solution. Ha - how the universe works to make the connections.....

One Week To Go

A couple of phone calls later with help from a new google drive set up solely for the Fleetwood nationals, Damian on the keyboard at one end, myself on the other, Jonthan B in the background ready to spring to my aid, and we've cracked it.

And that is how it was done.....or was it?

Friday 27th pre-race practice: Having left home at 05.30, I arrived at Fleetwood just after 10.00. All good. Derek had set up the media centre....well put a notice saying so on the door and I set up and tested my phone-based internet hotspot. All good.....

Saturday 28th race day 1: Hmmm, another one hundred people have arrived to race their boats and use the network - well I didn't think this through did I.

Damian wasn't kidding when he said the connection was flaky.

On water competition paled into insignificance compared with that for bandwidth, and I wasn't winning. Stressful is an understatement, so some rapid re-thinking of the plan was needed. Noting my stress, come the end of the day, a caring thoughtful contingent from the Scottish district took pity on me and insisted I join them for dinner. Some time later, it had been dark for many hours, I found my way back to my hotel for some much-needed sleep nursing a big headache (work related of course!)



CLASSES

Sunday 29th The revisions to the plan are working so Sunday is great, apart from a rather unnecessary and unsuccessful time-consuming protest which stopped everyone's enjoyment for an embarrassing amount of time.

Monday 30th Watching 'upload pending' icons is the new norm – I'm getting too quite liking them.

Monday 23.00 hrs I'm back home now, and despite being exhausted, I open my computer to check web viewer stats and get a some respite from using high speed broadband and a high form looking at the viewer stats.

Was it all worth it – absolutely. Roll on Castle Semple end April 2022 – look at the IOM web site calendar <https://www.iomgbr.co.uk/events>

(Ed. The above was written mainly before the event and readers will be able to relate what they see/hear of it to the words above. Thanks to Malcolm Appleton for this insight. It has to be said that it shows yet again - as if we needed reminding - that everything that happens in the MYA happens with/through/by volunteers.)



The IOM Nationals 2021 hub

