

Falmouth Newsletter, Autumn 2018

Well, what a year! The SOA Cornish Crabbers Falmouth Rally Pack this year was presciently entitled "*One Incredible Week in the Summer of 2018*" and so it was with gentle breezes and wall to wall sunshine, but more of that later

2018 has brought some changes for Falmouth SOA, not least the number of Shrimper stalwarts who have finally hung up their sea boots this year. Special mention must be made of Mark Osborn, *Boyers Shrimper 245*, who has been absolutely key to the success of the Association since the 80s. Also, Simon Sugrue, *Vagabond 355*, who confided that after 70 years of sailing, it was time for him to try something else before it was too late, and also Colin Campbell *Camilla 767*. Each have regularly participated in Shrimper events, made key contributions to the management of the Committee and importantly, selflessly shared their knowledge and skills with new Shrimper owners keen to learn the intricacies of gaff rigged sailing. We hope to see them all in the close season at our Sunday lunches.

Our first sailing event this year was Falmouth Classics between 22 and 24 June which always coincides with the Sea Shanty Festival – both now the biggest events of their type in the country. We have a separate Shrimper Class that we share with Cape Cutters. Definitely worth considering for a fun weekend with subsidised mooring at Falmouth Haven, much beer, song and Pirates – which has been a bit of a theme for us this year! Hold the date next year – 14 to 16 June 2019.



Like last year, we invited members of the Cornish Crabbers Club to our annual Rally between 7 and 14 July and were pleased to welcome 19 Shrimper 19s, 2 Shrimper 21s, a Crabber 22, a Mark II Crabber and a Cornish Yawl. Unfortunately the crew of an expected Crabber 26 mutinied at Plymouth on the way down.

Our programme this year was broadly the same as in 2017 (why spoil a good thing) with the marked exception of the weather, which made overnight stays on a Shrimper almost a pleasure! On day 1 after coffee and a briefing at *Muddy Beach*, we enjoyed a challenging Treasure Hunt, once again organised by Andrew and Jane Pleeth, *Penguin 931* followed by a BBQ hosted at *Windsport* by Brian and Cookie Phipps, *Ysella 298*. Sunday started with racing at St Mawes followed by a cruise to Tolverne for a swim in the Fal and the Pirate themed Cooking Competition accompanied by Shanty singing provided by Caro Smith, *Guilan Dhiu 334* and *Falmouth Shout* – what a great location for an overnight stay!



A gentle cruise on Monday up to the *Heron* at Malpas for yet more eating and drinking, followed by an exhilarating sail down to St Just for a guided tour of the historic Church and a BBQ on the Bar hosted by David and Jeannie Cornhill, *Crabber Mk II Winkle Too* - another idyllic overnight spot! Tuesday was Falmouth Day, and save for the short jaunt to the *Working Boat* for lunch, most activity was ashore, including a tour round the National Maritime Museum and you've guessed it, more eating and drinking in the evening at a private dining room in the newly refurbished *Chainlocker*.

You will know that Falmouth Shrimpers are an intrepid lot and Wednesday brought an epic passage for 12 boats across Falmouth Bay to the Helford River, although we should mention that we were shepherded by Malcolm and Ros Joyce, not on *Troika 942*, but on their substantial mother ship, *Rouletta*. As you would expect, we stopped for much needed nourishment at the *Shipwrights* before exploring uncharted waters to the north as far as Port Navas, and then round to Frenchman's Creek for some cultural reminiscing. Then after a short rest we dined ashore at Helford River Sailing Club before taking the water taxi back to the boats rafted together in the middle of the river.



On Thursday, after breakfast aboard, we enjoyed a sprightly fetch back across the Bay to St Mawes for a BBQ kindly hosted by Bryan and Jane Churcher, *Dros-Y-Mor 399* at their delightful waterside home, followed by racing at St Mawes SC, although many were so exhausted the turnout on the start line was a little disappointing! On Friday a number of boats cruised up to Trellissick and Turnaware Point for a swim before all meeting up at Ros and Malcolm's similarly beautiful home on Restronguet Creek where both the weather and the cream tea were glorious!



Friday evening racing at Mylor YC was very well attended with 12 boats competing for the Peter Keeling Memorial Trophy – Brian and Cookie Phipps, *Ysella 298* being clear winners. The Rally concluded on Saturday with the Prizegiving and lunch at *Castaways*, followed by the Point and Penpol Village Regatta in which *Ysella* once again claimed victory.

Truly an incredible week!

Since the Rally we have enjoyed similar extraordinary weather during Falmouth Week held between 9 and 18 August and although only 5 Shrimpers entered for the whole week, which was substantially down on last year, we were pleased to see another 8 boats competing on up to 3 of the 7 days. Many regattas seem to be experiencing similar smaller numbers which may mean shorter events in future years. Philip Swatman from Poole, *Alcina 976* was triumphant, retaining the overall *Cornish Shrimper Trophy* for a second year.

A major change for us this year has been the departure of Michael Wilson, our Chairman/Class Captain/Regional Secretary who embarked on an epic adventure of indeterminate length with his partner Kim and two dogs aboard *Venetian*, a Nauticat 43 ketch, at the beginning of July. Initially heading for France and Spain, who knows where the winds will take him. Unlike most of us, Michael has been holding down a very busy job whilst also working tirelessly for both Falmouth SOA and as Commodore of the *Cornish Crabbers Club* and fitting out *Venetian* for blue water cruising. We wish them fair winds and weather and look forward to hearing of their adventures on his return.

In the meantime, we are busy planning the remainder of this year's events – Sunday Lunch at the *Pandora* on 28 October - and both the dates and content of next year's Rally, which we anticipate will be broadly the same. We will also be exploring the feasibility of a cruise in company to Plymouth via Fowey to support ISW next year, having been shown the way last year by Liz Saudek, *Curlew 671*.

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