



Sierra Point Yacht Club



Spyglass Newsletter

**Weekly
Summer
Sailing
Races**

**Club
Social
Events**

**Cruise outs
& Cruise ins**

**Monthly
Dinners**

**Club Managed
by Volunteers**



November 2018 Edition

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1. Editor's Update

First of all, a very warm welcome to our new Commodore - Michael Bell, and the Board of Directors for this upcoming year, and many thanks to Quincy who has done an outstanding job of being our Commodore over the last two years. There is a lot of excitement to continue the good work that Quincy has done and so please support our new Commodore and the Board to continue to grow and improve the club for the benefit of our members and guests.

I am writing this month's edition from the good ship the Queen Mary 2 at 47 deg, 41.7 minutes North and 041deg, 48.2 minutes West, cruising at 21 knots on a 70 deg course. We have just exited the Flemish Caps off the coast of Newfoundland after having passed over the Grand Banks, and now heading out into the deep Atlantic following a great circle route. Seas are slight (at the moment) with a force 3, and expecting to climb to force 6 overnight; it is getting cold outside with a sea temp of only 3 degrees. We recently passed over the site of the Titanic, and one can imagine the terror of being thrust into the water at this cold sea temperature, it must have been a terrible death for those in the water.

I was delighted to link Scotty the Yachtie to the Brading Haven Yacht Club on the Isle of Wight during his visit to the UK last month. Scotty enjoyed a great day at the club including crewing on my swan Frolic for the Barts Bash charity race. I believe Frolic finished 8th out of 24 entrants from Bembridge - a great result from a wooden boat built in 1955.

I have included part 6 of the Hovercraft story with this month featuring the mother of all Hovercraft - the SR-N4. And coming close to the end of the Hovercraft story as I am sure you are getting weary of the article.

There was some excitement on the Isle of Wight recently with the discovery of a painting of the final leg of the very first America's cup race around the Isle of Wight in 1851 - see the end of Spyglass.

It seems that I have been elected back onto the BOD for this coming year and therefore it is my intention to make sure our members are updated on BOD issues/ideas/programs and resolutions.

And finally, lookout for some changes in the Spyglass format in upcoming editions to improve the look and content feel of the newsletter. I would also welcome comments on format and content.

That's all folks.

Spyglass editor.

nigelbaker10@yahoo.com

2. Commodore's Commentary for November

Greetings fellow SPYC members.

Thank you for electing me as your new Commodore. I'm looking forward to carrying on the excellent work of my predecessors in enhancing our club. Our election dinner took place on November 20th , preceded by our first foray into online voting.

We had a total of 66 votes; 48 online and 18 in person. The past few years have averaged 37 votes, leading me to believe that online participation is a success. I've also been assured that there was no 3rd party meddling.

I would like to thank our volunteers for hosting a wonderful event: David Brown & Jann Besson in the galley, Scott Harms & Diana Bortolussi behind the bar, Sarah Fitzgerald & any others I've forgot to mention. As we are a volunteer club, it's crucial that we all do what we can, no matter how small, to keep SPYC thriving. Your assistance is greatly welcome and greatly appreciated.

Allow me to introduce you to our 2018-2019 Board of Directors:

- Post Commodore: Quincy Bragg
- Vice Commodore: Dylan Garrett
- Rear Commodore: Melissa Vivas
- Port Captain: Ed Wilkinson
- Fleet Captain: Kathy Stern
- Secretary: Jim Lawrie
- Treasurer: Terry O'Connell

- Directors:

Nigel Baker, Craig Brackett, Matthew Denson, Renee Hartig, Charlene Larson and Martin Tali

I'm excited about all of the great things we will be accomplishing over the next year.

Michael Bell
Commodore

3. Club general Updates

No general club updates to report this month

4. Events Calendar Monthly Dinner

IT'S THE PIE CONTEST

This is a fun event. Bring along a home made pie and we'll give you a \$5 drink token.

If it is called PIE then it is a PIE. Test your talents before Thanksgiving. Sweet or savory, they will all be welcome.

Decorate your pie, with imagination and verve; be the most original or the prettiest pie. Give it a name

The pies will be judged by our experts on pie eating, Vera Jacobson, Kevin Hartig and Commodore Michael Bell. There will be plenty of prizes

There will be Chicken Pot Pie and Cottage Pie and salad for dinner and we will all taste the lovely pies as well.

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Event Panjandrum
ASarahFitz@gmail.com
415 412 7510



BREAKFAST AT SPYC -bi weekly

From the editor: Please help to make our winter monthly breakfasts a success. We have had cancellations recently due to a lack of breakfast cook volunteers and so volunteers are needed to fill the calendar.

The club breakfasts are now on the first Sunday of each month winter schedule. Please support our breakfast events as it is a good venue for members and guests to enjoy a relaxing Sunday breakfast and fix the woes of the world, oh! And talk about boats too.

Jim is constantly on the lookout for volunteers for the Sunday breakfast program to take responsibility for one of the Sunday breakfasts for the foreseeable future. Jim will take responsibility for ensuring you have the basic grocery supplies you need, as well as coordinating bar staff via Patrick, and set-up/clean-up support via Diane. Please contact Jim at: jklawrie@att.net

5. Cruise-Outs/Ins Update

From the editor:

The club cruise outs are a lot of fun and a great way for club members and guests to enjoy a weekend away from our normal routines. Kathy, our Fleet Maiden does a stellar job of arranging our cruise out schedules with other Yacht Clubs around the bay, and what better way to support Kathy than to sign up early for each cruise out. I especially would like to entice new members to join the cruise out fun. We will be providing more assistance to Kathy for the 2019 season to enhance and explore new Yacht Club/Marina destinations.

Cruise out schedule:

Nov 2nd - 4th St Francis Yacht Club

This cruise out to St Francis is probably one of the best as we are right in the heart of the marina district. We are booked now for these dates so please book early to ensure a space. The Friday evening buffet at the St Francis Yacht Club is not to be missed. More to come on this one

There's more to come so check the SPYC website regularly; bring me all of our constructive suggestions, and VOLUNTEER to help with cruise-outs and any other club activities that appeal to you. The more you participate the more fun you'll have and solid friendships will result. If you're shy you can quietly approach any board member with your offer to volunteer and we'll hopefully steer you in the right direction

Kathy Stern, Fleet Captain

For information on our cruising calendar please go to our web site cruising section on www.sierrapointyc.org/cruising where you can find detailed info and sign up procedures. You can also contact our Fleet Captain Kathy Stern on: fleet_captain@sierrapointyc.org

6. Beer Can Racing Update Closed for the Winter

Quincy Bragg
racing@sierrapointyc.org

7. Bulletin Board

No new bulletin board updates have been submitted for this month

8. Tech Tips. Items for Sale

No tech tips, items for sale posted this month

9. A day at our twin Club, the Brading Haven yacht Club - With Scotty the Yachtie

Dear Sierra Point Yacht club members,

I wish to thank Nigel Baker, our fearless SPYGLASS editor for responding to my inquiry regarding an idea I had of visiting his other yacht club in the U.K. this past September. Brading Haven YC is located in the village of Bembridge on the eastern side of the Isle of Wight and is glorious for sailing in the body of water known as the Solent that has nautical history spanning over a thousand years or more. (Could this be why the English are such enthusiastic sailors I wonder?)

Nigel had graciously forwarded email's to his friends on my behalf and soon thereafter, a Mr. Keith Gentleman invited me to rent a small flat and participate in their club's special regatta known as Bart's Bash. This is a fund-raiser dedicated to the honor of The Andrew Simpson foundation that incidentally, became a registry for the largest sailing regatta as listed in the Guinness Book of Records involving other sailing clubs throughout the world in a 24 hour period of time! I even got to sign the affidavit because they needed someone who was not related to anyone in the club nor was a member of their organization.

After a pre-race meeting that was held for all of the sailors who got their instructions prior to heading out of the harbor, Nigel's boat Frolic , a beautiful well cared for little mid- 1950's era wood Clinker- built Swan set off along with 24 other



Linda Bryant - Vice Commodore of BHYC. Linda did stellar work organizing the clubs participation in Barts Bash



Paul getting Frolic ready for sea - mainsail up and jib hanked on



Positioning for the start of the race. Our committee boat Sir Pellinore positioned at the starting line

registered boats for the regatta. Captain Paul Smith (no relation to John Smith I believe), was helmsmen and is a real Sea Captain. He began sailing in these waters over 45 years ago so I was happy to know that someone on the boat had local knowledge of the waters. As for me, I got the job of jib sheet handler and whisker pole loopers!

As Bembridge is a harbor town that has high and low tides over 10 feet that creates a local mud flat, the boats had to wait until the water reached its high mark at 3 p.m. before we could set off out into the Solent to begin the races as there were two 7- mile courses scheduled for that afternoon.

This was a handicapped race and included all kinds of design's from Laser's to multihull sailboats of modest and interesting proportions, yet most of the boats were of the dinghy class.

Frolic had a pretty good start, the winds were fresh out of the west at about 12+ knots and it was great fun to be in the midst of the jockeying process with so many boats approaching the starting line. Many of the boats literally came within inches of each other at moderate speeds as my head

and neck seemed to be rotating on a 360 degree axis so as not to collide with anyone. Paul and myself got a great position at the start along the leeward mark and found ourselves separated from the pack within a short period of time after the gun went off.

As the fleet spread out quickly, some of the faster high performance boats spun out along the way creating havoc on the course yet we all kept on making sure the sailor's who were in the drink were o.k. and kept on sailing to the various



Frolic charging along with Paul at the helm and Scott managing the jib



Some of the fleet underway in the race. Note how closely they are clustered together -a very competitive lot

marks about a half mile from shore. These were channel marks, floating buoys and even included a rounding past one of the old Palmerston forts dotted along the Solent called the St. Helen's fort that was built in the mid nineteenth century.

The afternoon wore on and the wind speed increased while little Frolic and the other boats found it a perfect day for sailing with warm sunshine and calm sea conditions.

After about two hours, it was time for the fleet to return to the harbour before the sun began to set.

Cap't. Paul offered me the helm and I found it great fun to dodge and weave between all of the dozens of moored boats that are kept on the hook throughout Bembridge harbor.

Frolic is without a motor so it was such a joy to see how beautifully this wonderful little boat responded with each tack as we eventually made it back to the Brading Haven yacht club dock.

As the boats were made fast for the early evening and the covers and sails were neatly stowed, a contingency of the racers gathered at the club for a few pints before calling it a day.

Brading Haven is similar in appearance to our own club and it felt very comfortable to be there with dedicated people who created this connection with sailing combined with a wonderful cause.

My advice; go to Bembridge and see this charming part of the world that will enliven your sailing spirit!

Happy Winds!
Scott Wal



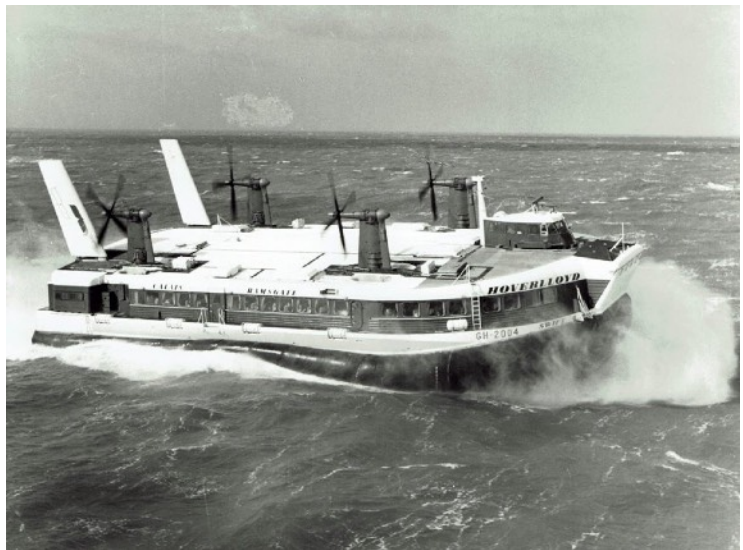
Hosts Paul and Sarah



Our illustrious poser - I mean sailor. Scotty on the club pontoon. A scow in the background

10. History of British Hovercraft P6. The mighty SR-N4

In the previous parts of this article I described the progressions of British Hovercraft designs from the initial SR-N1 and SR-N2 proof of concept designs to the military SR-N3 and the commercial SR-N5 and N6. During the SR-N5 and N6 production and modification runs, the design teams were working hard in the background on the ultimate goal of BHC - to produce a large vehicle and passenger transport that was capable of carrying over 200 passengers and up to 32 cars at speeds of up to 80 knots on a Hovercraft that could travel between continents - In this case the English Channel. The designation of this craft was to be the SR-N4 and the craft would incorporate the design strategies of the previous SR-N2 to SR-N6 craft, incorporating four gas turbines (each turbine generating over 4,000



The mark1 SR-N4 at hover and doing around 40 knots over rough seas in the English channel



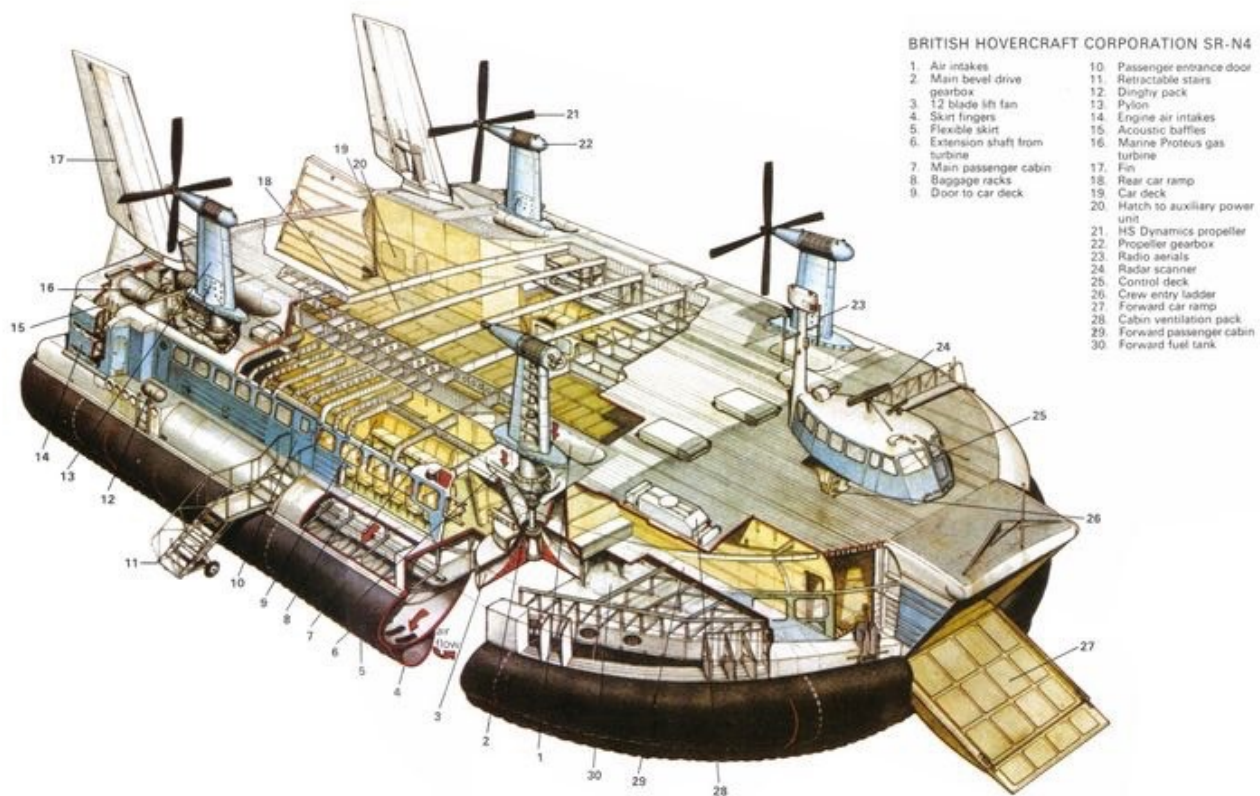
The Mk 2 SR-N4 at speed

horsepower) and coupled to four centrifugal lift fans and four swiveling Pylons that mounted huge 19 feet diameter variable pitch propellers providing forward and and reverse thrust. Power for the craft was to be provided by four Bristol Siddeley Proteus gas turbine engines. Each pylon could swivel independently through 35 degrees port and 35 degrees starboard and were controlled by a BHC designed analogue computer that was also used in the Black Night and Black Arrow rockets (yes, the UK did launch a test satellite on it's own developed rocket in the early 70's). The skirts attached to the bottom of the craft enabled the SR-N4 to clear 6 foot seas (highest estimated for the English Channel). The craft

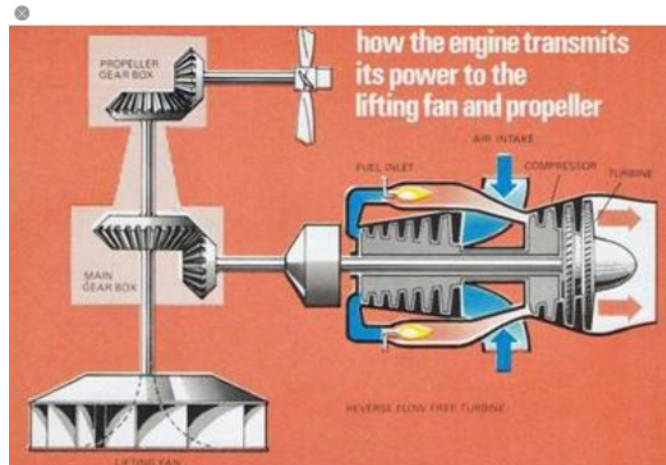
could achieve over 80 knots with full load over calm seas, and up to 40 knots in moderate force 5 to 6 conditions.

The diagram below shows an exploded view of an SR-N4 mark 1 (note: it was discovered that the craft could be stretched without changes to the mechanical propulsion systems except extending the drive shafts to the forward lift and propellor pylons, and so two stretched versions - the mark 2 and mark 3 were introduced through the 20 year life of the craft).

The four gas turbine engines were clustered at the stern of the craft, two each side. Each turbine drove a shaft that connected to each of the four lift and propulsion pylons, long shafts connecting to the forward units. The car deck was positioned through the center of the craft and passengers were seated on each side. The Pilots and navigators were stationed in a 'cockpit' forward on the roof. All of the structure was built around a buoyancy tank that could float with a full load.



To recap on the propulsion system: Each turbine powered a drive shaft to a gearbox that divided the power to both the propulsion pylon propellor and down to the centrifugal lift fan. The pylon gearbox transferred vertical power to horizontal propellor thrust power. The variable pitch propellers could pitch up to 35 degrees in forward and 35 degrees reverse thrust. The pylons themselves could also rotate 35 degrees to port and 35 degrees to starboard



A diagrammatic view of the SR-N4 propulsion system. Four were employed on the craft

I have very fond memories of the SR-N4. As part of my electronics apprenticeship at the British Hovercraft Corporation (BHC) I was fortunate to go out on several of the prototype mark 1 craft trials in the Solent and English Channel, and have some great stories of some of these runs to tell over a beer or wine at the club. I became very good friends with one of her chief test Pilots (yes, they were called Pilots just like in an Aeroplane) and we remained friends right up to his passing earlier this year. And yes, she did meet her speed goals - I believe we achieved 80 knots one day on trials on a very calm sea to the astonishment of shipping traffic in the Channel. She could move, with maximum throttle on those four turbines and those huge 19 feet diameter pylon propellers in maximum forward thrust pitch.



A view of the rear transport loading and unloading mechanism

11. America's Cup - A painting depicting the first race

The painting below was recently discovered on the isle of Wight. It is a significant find as it depicts the schooner America participating in the very first America's Cup race held in 1851 with the course starting at the prestigious Royal Yacht Squadron in Cowes (Royal being Royal - Queen Victoria was a member), and the race circling the Island and finishing at the start line. The scene shows America approaching the Needles at the Western end of the Island - well ahead of the other competitors. The paddle steamer Yacht to the left in the picture is the royal yacht Albert and Victoria, and Queen Victoria was aboard watching the race and was 'not amused' that an American Yacht was winning. To this day a round the island sailing race is held every August to celebrate the original race - up to 7000 yachts participate.

I will write a detailed history of the origins of the America's cup in a future edition



That's all for this month folks.
Spyglass Editor

