

President's and Secretary's Reports, presented at the East Coast Area AGM

4 November, 2023, Royal Harwich Yacht Club

President's Report

Unsurprisingly, 2023 has been a very busy year on the East Coast thanks to the 60th Jubilee celebrations & I'd like to begin by thanking all of our Jubilee Committee members for their help & enthusiasm, which made the event the success it was, despite the best efforts of Storm Antoni! Likewise we owe a huge debt of gratitude to all our sponsors, supporters & volunteers on the ground who made the event possible.

Looking ahead to the Jubilee Party a dedicated group of Gaffers kicked off our winter programme with a beer tasting evening at Briarbank in Ipswich with the aim of selecting a suitable brew for our Gaffers Jubilee beer. Fortunately the 11% "Grounds for Divorce" was rejected in favour of something a little less strong!

A good number of East Coast members attended the National AGM at Portsmouth which featured a very interesting & enjoyable social programme in addition to the actual AGM part. East Coast members acquitted themselves very well in the National Awards with Poppy Curtis winning the Alan Hidden Trophy, Gus Curtis the President's Commendation, Ellie Rule winning the Sailing Tales Trophy, Steve & Beverley Daley-Yates winning the Gaffers Tales Award. In the photography competition Tony Pickering won second prize with Josh Masters, Paul Masters & Rob Hart all being highly commended.

Sadly a few days later saw the passing of Deben based member Peter Clay, owner of 'Nirvana of Arklow' & a stalwart of the Albert Strange Association. He is a great loss to the East Coast Sailing Community.

February brought a social gathering to Woodbridge, where Claudia Myatt gave a fascinating talk about her Antarctic & Southern Ocean Adventures, then in April we had the ever popular Burnham Dinner thanks as always to the efforts of Elaine & Trevor Rawlinson. The last weekend of April brought the Ramsgate gathering to send off the Round Britain fleet, which included 5 East Coast boats & thanks must go to Robert & Jan Holden for organising such a successful event.

In May & June the small boat fleet was treated to windy Tollesbury & Swallows & Amazons events in readiness for an even windier Jubilee Party weekend. Sadly the weather led to cancellation of the first Gaffling Championship. It is now planned to incorporate it in Swallows & Amazons 2024.

The big Party weekend must have broken all East Coast OGA records for rainfall & wind at a single event but despite this people seemed to have a good time. A special thanks must be due to Claudia Myatt & Sue Pennison for ramping up their art & rope workshops to entertain those stranded ashore & to Haven Ports Yacht Club for opening & manning the Lightship bar all day.

This year's Summer Cruise followed on from the Jubilee Party & headed south to end at Chatham. The weather, while not perfect, was an improvement on the weekend. I'd like to say a particular thanks to the group of our younger members who stepped in to organise the cruise, relieving the main committee of this responsibility. Unfortunately the fleet were trapped in Chatham by a malfunctioning lock gate at the end of the cruise, but such occurrences seem to have been the norm this year. A good number of the Round Britain boats were held up by a bridge breakdown in the Caledonian Canal, Mary Gibbs was similarly delayed by a faulty lock on her cross England expedition & I can testify to having had a few days delay thanks to a bridge breakdown in the Crinan Canal.

As a follow up to the Jubilee celebrations our Committee met to review the event, look at lessons learned & areas where we could identify room for improvement in future large events. Inevitably we

did find some aspects which could have been improved (in addition to the weather) but overall the conclusion was that feedback received had been very positive.

The OGA sailing events were rounded off for the season by the Slaughden Rally & for some a trip to Holland for Rik Homan's event. Although not strictly an OGA event, Maldon Town Regatta is another late season fixture supported by our members. I have to tell you that earlier this week sadly Gerry Courtney, long time organiser of Maldon Town Regatta passed away & we extend our sympathies to her family.

Looking ahead the programme for the next year is taking shape, beginning with a talk by Cathy Shelbourne at Robertson's Boatyard, Woodbridge on 9th December. For dates for other events, including the National AGM, Burnham Dinner, Deben Rally, Swallows & Amazons, East Coast Race & Southwold Rally I'll refer you to Eastcoaster & the website.

Next summer will also see the Dutch OGA Anniversary event. It was great to see so many of our Dutch friends at our Jubilee Party & I'd urge you to think about supporting their event in 2024.

Finally, I'd like to give my thanks to all of our Committee for their help & support over the year & particular thanks to those who are standing down today. Clare Thomas has served as Treasurer for 16 years as well as contributing a great deal to many other aspects of our activities, Lorna has been Secretary for 9 years and I have been President also for 9 years, so it is time for a change and a rest! We are standing down to make way for new blood.

Pete Thomas & Yvonne Mitchell have also indicated that they will stand down and Richard Giles, another long serving Committee member stood down earlier in the year, so there are lots of opportunities for enthusiastic volunteers to introduce new blood to the committee, which we can explore later in the meeting.

Robert Hill, President, 2014 - 2023

Secretary's Report

Hello everyone, it is good to see you this evening.

Well, what a year we have had. Obviously, the Jubilee Party and Cruise have taken centre stage this year and I would like to thank the many members, both committee members and non committee members who rolled up their sleeves and got stuck in and volunteered in the many roles assisting in Ipswich, Levington and onto Chatham, before and during the events. Thank You All.

As Secretarial duties go, this year far outweighed any others I have experienced in my nine year term. You may be aware that I am standing down as Secretary, that has nothing to do with the past year's level of work, but I sincerely hope my successor doesn't experience such a high level of Secretarial duties!

You may recall from last year's AGM that attendees were asked to vote on their desire for the Association to consider a change of name. The vote from the East Coast was a resounding 'No'. Your President and myself took this information to the AC Meeting the following January. I regret to say, that most areas appeared not to have asked their members their feelings on this subject. However, despite the EC strongly contesting their corner, some other areas were quite vocal that there should be a discussion on the subject. The National President asked if I would agree to Chair a small Committee to discuss the subject of a possible name change. I agreed to do this. Understandably, it was not possible to arrange a committee meeting prior to OGA60 and the Jubilee Party. Further, it has still proved difficult to arrange a mutually convenient date to all committee members to hold a meeting up to now, but I am pleased to say that 4 January 2024 is now the fixed date. I will report to the AC Meeting the results of this meeting.

We have had over 30 new members join the East Coast Area of the OGA this past year, which I think is excellent news. On your behalf I would like to wish a warm welcome to them all.

Please can I ask for your nominations for the Annual OGA Awards to be made, either to the new Secretary to forward on, or direct to the National Secretary Colin Stroud. If you take a look at the OGA website you will be able to study the various categories.

Lorna Hill, Secretary, 2014 - 2023