

CAT - A - LOG

**A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR NAUTICAT
ASSOCIATION MEMBERS**



The Cat's come out for Xmas

NA
NAUTICAT ASSOCIATION

Nauticat Association Newsletter

Issue Number 46

Winter 2007

MERCHANDISE

SWEATSHIRTS (50% Cotton 50% polyester)

S to XL £19.99 XXL £21.99 White, Black, Bottle Green, Grey, Jade Green, Kelly Green, Maroon, Navy Blue, Sky Blue, Beige, Yellow.

POLO SHIRTS (65% Cotton 35% Polyester)

S to XL £16.99. White, Black, Bottle Green, Maroon, Emerald Green, Navy, Royal Blue, Sky Blue, Yellow Grey.

POLO SHIRTS (100% Cotton)

S to XL £16.99 XXL £18.99. White, Grey, Black, Yellow, Dark Navy, Salmon, Maroon Bottle Green, Sky Blue, Orange, Persian Blue.

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Navy, Black, White, Royal Blue, Bottle Green, Burgundy, Kelly Green, and Gold. All with white collar.

Small to XL £28.99. XXL £29.99

WOOLLY HATS

Two layer black or navy blue knitted acrylic with Association Logo and boat name £6.99

The above prices include the garment, embroidered with the Association logo and personalised with your boat's name and inclusive of VAT. They may be ordered through the Secretary.

Cat-a-Log

Issue No. 46 Winter 2007

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Chairman's Notes

Isn't it amazing – the older one gets, the faster time seems to pass! I can hardly believe it is once again time to sit down and write notes for yet another edition of the Cat-a-Log. It is one of the quieter times of the year as we are only about three weeks away from the shortest day. It is indeed a happy thought that before much more time has rushed by it will be time to prepare for yet another sailing season, in the hope that the weather will be a little kinder than it was last year.

The only Nauticat event that has happened since I last wrote was the Lay-Up Dinner at the Lifeboat College in Poole. It was not quite so well attended as last year due, I fear, to the original intransigence of the College over the matter of their accommodation. At the fourth time of asking, (begging, beseeching, going on bended knee etc.) they decided it would be possible for our members to have rooms for one night only. However by the time they got round to this momentous decision, I suspect that some of our members had decided that it was not viable to commit to two nights. Those who did make it had a wonderful evening as ever, or so I am led to believe by the reactions of the members afterwards. They served us a delicious meal, enjoyed by twenty-seven members, including three attending for the first time. The excellent wine and the conversation flowed all evening, and our ladies did us proud showing how glamorous sailing ladies can be. We were very sad that Sally and Trevor Doran had to pull out at the very last minute and are very glad to have heard since that Sally is now better.

Before the start of the festivities I had asked for a little get-together of the committee members who were present – a surprising number when you consider some of the distances travelled. I have had a niggling matter on my mind for a little while – the fact that I am lucky enough to be Chairman of a lovely sailing association even though I haven't owned a Nauticat for five years or a boat of any kind for two, because of Sophie's health problems. I had intended the next AGM to be my last, as I thought the Association might well be better served by a Chairman who is currently a regular sailor. Those who were present indicated that they personally did not consider this to be a problem and would be very pleased if Sophie and I would be prepared to carry on

a bit longer. I was very touched by their words, and would be only too happy to do so subject, of course, to the wishes of the membership. The AGM is the place to come along and have your say and we look forward to seeing as many of you as can get there. Of course my job would not be possible without all the help and hard work of our committee members, and very dear friends, Barbara, Annemarie, Richard, Clive, Robin, Bob, Patricia and of course my own dear wife, and I am so grateful to them all.

Having mentioned the AGM in the previous paragraph, I now come on to the subject in more detail. As you will all know by now, as the letters were sent out about six weeks ago, this is being held at the Novotel Centre in Bristol on 1st – 3rd February, 2008. It is about three weeks earlier than usual as this was the only weekend the hotel could fit us in. The letters had to go out as early as they did because the visit to the Bristol Hippodrome on Friday night is to the musical "Mama Mia". Tickets have been as scarce as hen's teeth as this will be the penultimate night of an extremely popular show. I have used up all our original allocation and am not able to get **any more** - if however you have "missed the boat" as it were, and would have liked to go, send me your name, but not the money for the tickets at this stage and I will put you on a first-come, first-served waiting list in case any of those who already have booked, unfortunately have to drop out. I can accept bookings for hotel rooms and the dinner on Saturday night up until the 5th January, 2008, on which date I will have to confirm final room numbers with the hotel. So **please**, if you do wish to come, don't file the form in the "must get around to it" file, but fish it out and send it to me soonest. If you have mislaid the form, contact me and I will e-mail or post you a replacement straight away. If you only wish to attend the meeting, you are welcome to do just that, but it would still be helpful to hear from you so I can print name badges etc. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible as this is your chance to have your say about **your** own Association. We look forward to welcoming as many of our new members as possible – if you are worried that it will be a bit of a tedious event full of boring boat talk, do come along and prepare to be very surprised. It is intriguing to

notice how many new members are a bit hesitant about coming for their first time but then usually become regular attenders.

After these fairly lengthy notes, it remains only for me to wish you and all your families the very merriest of Christmases and a very happy, healthy and peaceful New Year for 2008.

All the best from Sophie and myself, and we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in Bristol,



Stewart.



A Watery Tale !

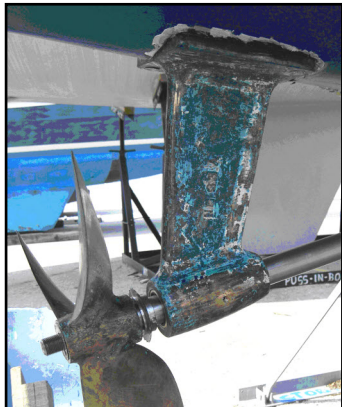
One day in early May, we took our Nauticat 33 “Minimum” out for her first shake-down sail of the season. After a pleasant day in the Solent we returned to our berth in Haslar creek, secured the boat and made ready to go home. My last act before leaving the boat was to switch on the bilge pump to check that the bilge was dry. I was somewhat taken aback when, instead of the usual short gloop of water, a torrent issued from the pump discharge and continued to do so. All thought of going home was abandoned and up came the wheelhouse floor to reveal the bilge level up to the bottom of the trusty Sabre engine. In a 33 this is a lot of water! I estimated about 40 gallons was in the bilge and a quick “sip” soon revealed it was salty. After pumping out the bilge, investigation revealed that the stern gland was leaking at any shaft revs above idling speed. At idling speed or out of gear the shaft seal was watertight, but any increase in speed and a substantial spray of water issued from the Deep Sea Seal. The following day the boat was hauled out of the water for repairs.

When I had bought Minimum in Holland 18 months earlier, I had been quite pleased to find that she was fitted with a Deep Sea Seal rather than the Nauticat standard stuffing box seal. Now I was not so sure! I was used to Deep Sea Seals as they were fitted to the submarines in which I had served in the Navy. Thank goodness I had never suffered a catastrophic failure, such as I now appeared to have in the Nauticat ! Moreover, I decided that I really didn't want a seal that could fail in such a spectacular way. After a very helpful discussion with Richard Bartlett, I decided to try and source a stuffing box type seal to replace the Deep Sea Seal.

Meanwhile, I uncoupled the shaft, removed the Deep sea seal and threw it away! As I had also noticed some shaft vibration when investigating the shaft seal leak, I examined the Cutless bearing in the P bracket and as it looked fairly worn I decided to renew that as well. This proved a big problem. The cutless bearing was retained in the P bracket by a recessed grub screw, which I found and removed quite easily. However, the bearing was an interference fit in the housing (P bracket) and would not be removed. After further discussion with Richard, I tried using a dummy bearing to push the cutless bearing out without success. I manufactured a press using angle iron and threaded rods. The design and construction of this tool attracted many complimentary comments but it still didn't work and neither did any combination of the tool and hammer blows with increasingly large hammers! Eventually, and reluctantly, I decided to remove the P bracket as the shaft cannot otherwise be withdrawn due to the presence of the skeg which gets in the way.

After bolstering my courage with a couple of beers at lunchtime, to my surprise the P bracket came off relatively easily – also to the surprise of my octogenarian friend who had offered to hold the P bracket whilst I undid the 4 securing bolts in the after cabin bilge – it was **very** heavy ! I was then able to remove the P bracket complete with the cutless bearing from shaft and take it to the workshop where I was able to cut the cutless bearing out with a hacksaw in the traditional way. It appeared to have been sealed in with “Loctite” or some similar compound and I suspect it was the original fitted bearing from build in 1993.

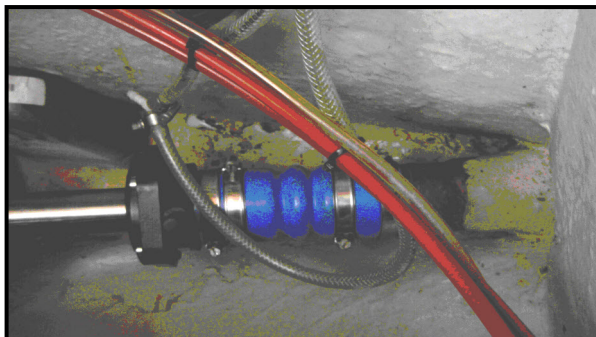
The new Cutless bearing fitted quite easily but snugly and tight enough for comfort. I drilled and tapped a second grub screw hole in the P bracket to supplement the single grub screw that I found when dismantling it. The P bracket was then refitted to the boat, the bolts being a nice tight fit to locate it accurately.



*P Bracket re-fitted with new
Cutless bearing
(before fairing to hull with epoxy putty)*

In the meantime, my search for a good old fashioned stuffing box and greaser had revealed a couple of suppliers but the whole assembly was quite expensive (about £300). In the end, I went to a firm called Lake Engineering in Poole. They could supply a stuffing box type seal, but suggested that I should get a thing called a “SureSeal” by a firm called Tides Marine (www.tidesmarine.com). To get to the point, after doing some homework, I bought one and fitted it. It works a treat, was much simpler to it than a stuffing box and greaser, and so far, after about 250 hours motoring, I am very happy with it. These seals are apparently fitted to all Sunseeker boats and you can see the details on the website. It didn’t cost **much** more than a Stuffing box assembly! I can recommend Lake Engineering to anyone living in the Poole – Portsmouth area (www.lakesterngear.co.uk and the contact is Les Hill) They do all items of stern gear, shafts, props, seals, etc etc. and were very helpful.

*Tides Marine
“Sure Seal”
as installed*



The final episode of this saga was that when I checked the engine alignment, there was a 40 thou (0.04inch) lateral misalignment across the diameter of the gearbox coupling flange. I managed to shift the engine sideways using jacks and wedges to reduce this misalignment to about 8 thou, and the shaft now runs very smoothly. We could not feel any noticeable vibration in the boat before this incident, but visually you could see the flexible coupling “wobbling” at anything above idling speed.

I learned a couple of lessons from this episode!

- Because of the remoteness of the bilge in the Nauticat, I had become complacent about visually checking it. Consider fitting a bilge alarm and keep the bilge pump switched to Auto. Also visually check the stern gland at regular intervals. It is easier to sight this than to lift the wheelhouse deck to sight the bilge. **Always** pump the bilge before leaving the boat – this saved us from possibly sinking!
- Visually check the shaft for vibration at various shaft revs. Because the Nauticat is such a heavily built boat, vibration may not make itself felt until it gets really serious.
- Don’t use Deep Sea Seals!

John Phillips
Nauticat 33
“Minimum”

Logs from Ocean Blue

A new member, George Chadwick is singlehanding his Nauticat 35 to the West Indies and is at present in Porto Santo, Madeira. George has kindly sent his log for publishing which I believe could be of great interest; I will be serialising George's adventure as it unfolds.

Part One - The First Few Days

2nd October 2007 Tarbert – Sanda. 40 Nm

Departed Tarbert at 0930, nice SE'y breeze, hoping to make anchorage in Sanda by the evening, but the wind died away a bit, I had to motorsail for a time, then found that there was a small coolant leak in the engine, so decided to pull into Campbelltown instead, berthing at 1900.

3rd October 2007 Campbelltown – Bangor. 40 Nm

Departed Campbelltown 0730 with a decidedly poor weather forecast, thought I might have to pull into Sanda if the SE wind proved too strong, then a later forecast said the wind would turn to the NW, which would have made Sanda anchorage far too open, so it was either on across the North Channel or run back to Campbelltown and try again tomorrow.

Not having the sense I was born with, I decided to press on for Bangor, the wind was very adverse at SE 5/6, and it took me 4 hours to weather the Mull of Kintyre, and then rose to Force 6 with a vicious short sea, wave height 10 – 12 ft as we entered the North Channel proper. Being unable to make sufficient headway into the wind to make Bangor before dark, decided to bear off for Glenarm in Co. Antrim, arriving there at 1615 in the evening, with a ripped spray hood and the galley deck swimming in pasta sauce and sunflower oil from broken jars which had cascaded from the pantry locker. The crossing was my hardest day in Ocean Blue so far; I got a good soaking and took a few green seas while bobbing around like a demented cork and I ended up with bruises in places I didn't know I had, but it felt like I'd at last started to test myself and had so far coped.

No rest for the wicked on berthing at Glenarm, the sprayhood had to be restitched, the cloth hadn't torn, but the stitching was rotten and required a bit of work, which ended up with me breaking my two smallest sail needles.

4th October 2007

Glenarm – Bangor

26 Nm

Nice early start from Glenarm at 0730, a really bonny day shaping up, winds Westerly up to Force 3, tide adverse until midday, but it's not a long leg to Bangor, and I wasn't in any great hurry. Sailed the whole day without any need to motor, arriving in Bangor at 1345 to be helped on to the berth by Tom, the mechanic who had sorted out my coarse diesel filter problem when I'd passed through Bangor on my way to Tarbert in April. No clearing up to do after such a nice easy sail, so I took a very long walk out to Bangor ring road to the local Vision Express, to replace the reading glasses I'd managed to tread on as I left Tarbert. (Memo to self – the deck is not the place to put your glasses down when you are a clumsy klutz). The people at Vision Express were brilliant, I walked in at 1500, had my eyes tested and two pairs of reading glasses made by 1615, which gave me enough time to get back to Bangor centre before the chandler closed so I could replace the two broken sail needles. Bit of a bummer to learn that I've the beginning of a cataract in my right eye, must have been the exposures in the Tropics as a loon, when none of us had the knowledge to wear anti UV specs and slap on Factor 50, instead of olive oil and the sound of sizzling human flesh!

5th October 2007

Bangor – Strangford Lough

40 Nm

Not a day for me to be proud of. I'd arranged to meet Brian Law, who sold Ocean Blue to me, this morning, so by the time he'd had a coffee and I'd mercilessly picked his brain for advice about some of the boat's systems, and about the best itinerary for heading down the Irish Sea, it was 1200 before I was ready to set off. The wind was directly astern of me on the finger, I found I hadn't enough hands to manage the ropes and engine at the same time, so had to abandon my first attempt at getting away and go and find one of the marina staff to help me, which cost me 20 minutes I could have spared by having the sense to ask for help in the first place.

I didn't make any sort of passage plan, Brian had suggested that with the late departure, I might sail as far as Donaghadee, just round the corner from Bangor, so I didn't bother with my usual homework before departure. In the event, the wind was blowing a fairly full Force 5/6 as I entered Donaghadee Sound, Donaghadee seemed far too close for a daysail, so I decided to press on to Strangford Lough, the tide being favourable, and Ocean Blue making 7kts. on the stbd. tack out towards the Isle of Man, although only 4/5 kts. on the more Southerly port tack towards land. I didn't take proper account of the weather forecast, which said the wind would die back to S'yly Force 2 later in the afternoon, which it duly did, leaving me with too much distance and not enough light to reach Strangford by 1700. I was then forced to motorsail, which I should have been doing for at least the previous hour, in order to get to Strangford with any chance of carrying the light, which I didn't manage. I'd at least had the fortune to arrive with the tide still flooding into the Lough, so when I throttled back to 4 kts, the GPS had me charging up the Narrows at 9.8 kts!

I arrived off Portaferry Marina in the pitch-dark and almost frightened the life out of myself as I turned to stbd. to enter and immediately carried on moving sideways at 5 and a bit knots. I've rarely been so glad to slide in between the welcoming arms of a marina entrance.

This whole passage was a total piece of nonsense by someone who definitely knows better, and will in future be sure to make proper passage plans.

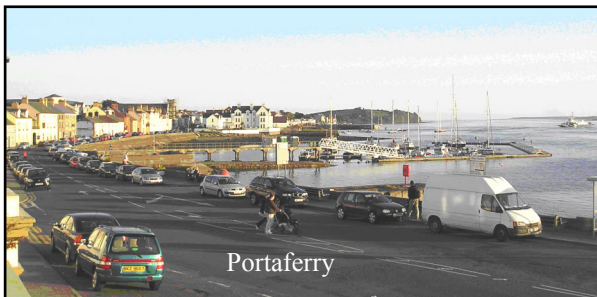
Split the Cordura seat protection in my sailing suit to add to today's perfection, it is going to be difficult to arrange for Duncan's the chandler to get a replacement pair to me.

6th October 2007

Portaferry.

Decided to have a rest today to celebrate my 59th birthday, there were also a few nagging problems requiring to be fixed. There were two annoying leaks through the decks to port and starboard at the point where the shroud fastenings are attached, so I had to lift off the plates, remove the old caulking and recaulk. The cooling water problem had not gone away, so I had to give it a bit more application this time, and

I think it is mostly sorted. Ocean Blue also needed a good wash down and air-out, so I didn't get the rest day started until 1430, when I went ashore for a coffee and a read at the Guardian. Crossword was a beast, Araucaria being determined to give me grief with one of his un-



numbered specials to see me out of UK, but by dint of a bit of application and a lot of luck, I managed to get it done and into the post. Knowing my luck, it'll never reach the Guardian given

the impending postal strike.

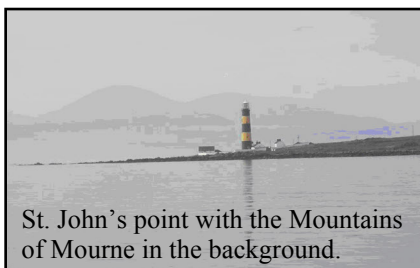
7th October 2007 Strangford Lough to Carlingford Lough 39 Nm

Remembered to do my passage plan today, the tide doesn't turn here in the Narrows before 1100, so the earliest I could get away was the back of 1000, when the tide had started to slow a bit. Free of the marina at 1020, then down the Narrows on a beautiful calm morning, although only making 3 kts. with the diesel giving me revs. for 6.5.

Had the mainsail up long before I reached the mouth of the Narrows, but I might as well not have bothered, there was no wind to be had all day so the Genoa remained furled, but I kept the main up in case of the odd draught. This was a beautiful passage, the Mountains of Mourne to stbd. and a glassy smooth sea.

Crossing Dundrum Bay, I passed three Minke whales, the first one while I was on the phone to Susan,

Andrew and wee Andrew, so I was able to indulge in being a smartarse as I reported it to them in real time. The second one announced itself with a mighty blast as it surfaced about 50m. on my port quarter, while the third was obviously into some serious feeding, given the number of gulls, gannets and guillemots wheeling around it. Today started



St. John's point with the Mountains of Mourne in the background.

with a Common or Harbour seal at the exit from Strangford, and one of its mates was waiting at the entrance to Carlingford to check my ticket at the turnstile.

Alongside at Carlingford Marina at 1640 took a walk into the town, about 15 mins on tired legs. Unlike the rather funereal Marina, Carlingford Town was buzzing, it seems to be the sort of place people go for a Sunday run. Lots of Norman defensive architecture, charming old buildings in centre of town, loads of pubs boasting of their music.

8th October 2007 Carlingford Lough to Malahide 51Nm

Definitely a day to forget!

The day started off nicely, sunny, romantic mist over the Mountains of Mourne, even a nice goodbye from a harbour seal as we slipped through the entrance. The tide was still making, so I had to wait until 0900 when it was past its worst before slipping from the Marina. The wind was very variable at first, the engine had to go on and off a couple of times before it made up its mind and settled into the SE. It soon became clear that it wouldn't be possible to make the intended destination of Howth just North of Dublin on sail alone, the wind being too adverse, so the engine had to go on for good at 1300, the sails down shortly thereafter as the wind moved more Southerly and strengthened to Force 5/6, raising a typical short steep wind-against-tide Irish Sea wave train. I tried to get a couple of pictures early on, but digital camera lag made that difficult, and when it became much



heavier later, I wasn't going to subject the camera to a lensful of salt water.

At about 1500 I phoned Howth to book a berth, only to be told they were holding their Autumn Regatta, and that there were no spaces available. This left me with my second

option, Malahide, which I had initially been going to visit, but not after looking at the shallow approach. Anyway, I phoned them, asked if a berth was available, gave my length and draught, and asked if there would be enough water at my arrival time. I was assured there would be no problem.

I arrived off the fairway buoy at 1730 and took the marked passage, but before Ocean Blue could even reach the first set of marks, she surfed off the back of a roller, struck bottom and immediately broached to and headed for the beach, with the keel dragging along the sand. I gunned the engine and managed to get the head round to seaward, but after a couple of minutes with the only apparent movement being towards the beach, I had to declare a Mayday. Dublin Coastguard responded immediately, but just as I was giving them my position, good old Ocean Blue somehow dragged herself back into deeper water, then bumped and thumped along the bottom until fully clear of the putty. Coastguard then got in touch with Malahide Marina who informed them that there was only 1.5 meters at the bar at the entrance at that time, so the grounding can hardly be described as a surprise to them. Malahide then contacted me directly and advised that there would be sufficient water at 1830, which there was, but you can imagine how many kilohertz my knees were doing as I approached the bar for the second time. To add insult to injury, they allocated me a berth with the wind coming in directly from astern, and their promised berthing help didn't arrive until after I'd made a complete cock of my first approach, which left me stuck down a marine cul-de-sac with little room for backing and filling to get back out into an advantageous position for trying again. I gave up on their suggested berth and found an empty one head to wind that required no outside help, so then the guy who had promised to be there for me did turn up.

Apart from the sheer terror of nearly losing Ocean Blue so early in the voyage, I find myself really angry, having clearly taken the advice from the Pilot Book to check depths with the Marina, I was given extremely dangerous information, and although as yet there is no sign of any damage to the hull, she took a couple of really hard thumps, and who knows whether there was damage to the rudder until it is properly

surveyed. First thing tomorrow I shall be seeking an interview with the Marina Manager.

It looks as if tomorrow is going to have to be a rest day.

9th October 2007

Malahide Marina

While not being prepared to accept responsibility for yesterday's near disaster, the Marina did in fact do so by arranging to have Ocean Blue lifted out and inspected without charge. There was some minor damage to the filler at the front of the keel, and the anti-fouling where the lead keel joins the fibreglass hull was cracked where it had suffered bending stresses, but thankfully the rudder had not touched bottom, which I had



most feared. They have been kindness itself, and there was no quibble about repairing the filler, I also got a free hull pressure wash thrown in.

I have to stay for an extra day here in Malahide, as I expected, but I've been told there will be no charge for the extra day, without even having to ask. As for tomorrow, which depends on the tide and the weather, I haven't picked out a next port, but I'm keen to get South of Dublin. Whatever happens, my

port of departure will be the City Marina at Waterford, where Duncan's the chandlers have arranged to send me a replacement for the split trousers.

Yesterday's inundation of the decks revealed at least two more shroud plates leaking, I had enough caulking to fix the suspected villains, but the galley hatch will have to wait to be reseated after I get to a chandler for a new tube of Lifecaulk. Happy days!

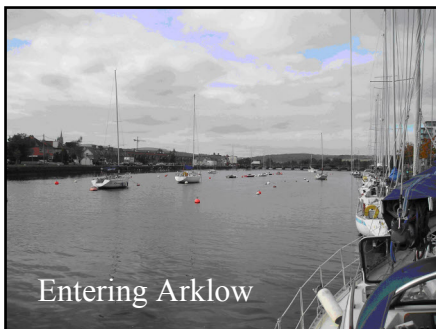
10th October 2007

Malahide to Arklow

46Nm

Because of the shallow draught at Malahide Bar, we had to wait until 0845 before departing, but at least this time there were no dramas at the shallow bit. There wasn't a breath of wind, so no point in putting up the sails, this was definitely a day for engine only. Quite overcast at first, the clouds gradually burnt off, and by midmorning it was short sleeves. The tide was foul until 1100, then turned and tucked itself under Ocean Blue's stern, becoming so strong that as we passed Wicklow Head, we were doing 10.7 kts. over the ground while the engines were giving revs for 6.5 kts.

Although calm, there was a moderate swell all day, so we rolled our way to Arklow, but it was pleasant enough, and there were plenty of porpoises around to keep up the sightseeing. The manager at Malahide



had advised me to take an inshore track for the view, this proved good advice, as the coastline was bonny. Arrived off Arklow at 1445, an average speed of about 7 ½ kts, including the pilotages at both ends. I'd have preferred to carry on for two or three more hours, but there wasn't a safe port within the distance we could make, so it was a

day for an early bath.

The owner of the marina asked where I was coming from and going to, when he learned of my intention he refused to charge me for berthing, he said he'd get me back in the Spring on my return!

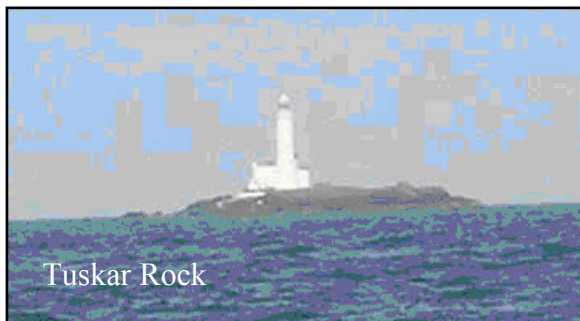
Went for a very long walk to the chandler across the river for sail twine, caulking compound and small sail needles, all I got was the needles, but an increase in the fitness regime. Arklow quite a vibrant place, lots of new building, more East European accents than Irish, a soulless new shopping centre on this side of the river, a much nicer older shopping street on the South side. Amazed by the number of quaint old pubs, I definitely miss out with my non-alcoholic habits.

11th October 2007

Arklow to Kilmore Quay

60Nm

Good start to the day, I got a copy of the Guardian before leaving, so that is bound to keep me awake for an extra couple of minutes tonight as I wrestle with the crossword. Got off the berth and out of the harbour by 0830, then tried to sail for a bit, but with the prevailing high pressure system the wins were fickle, it was back to motor and mainsail by 0920. It was a nice quiet passage until the back of 1100, when the tide turned in our favour, but that also meant that the Force



3 SW'y wind that had set in was dead against the tide and the seas started to shorten and steepen. I had intended taking the inside passage at Tuskar Rock, but as we approached to about ten miles off, it was obvious that was

never going to happen, the Pilot Book was very careful to warn small craft away from the tide rips inside in these conditions, so the outside passage and extra distance were forced on us.

In the end, I think I might as well have chanced the inside passage, we swept round Tuskar doing 10.7kts. while making revs. for 6.5kts. but the waves were like enormous sleeping policeman, and just as unyielding. The pitching was truly horrendous, but at least with the pressure of the wind in the mains'l we weren't rolling much. Then the (unprintable word) starboard lazyjacks which take some of the weight of the boom and secure the sailbag broke, and the sailbag started to flog itself to tatters, so I had to quickly turn into the wind to get the main down and the sail packed away somehow, which took a sweaty twenty minutes perched on a very active coachroof. Luckily, the lazyjacks hadn't parted, as they would have been a sod to replace, a stopper knot had just come adrift. Without the stabilising effect of the main, the reason for the slightly misspelt Tuskar now became clear, the general effect of the rolling and pitching was a bit like being trampled by a herd of ill-behaved pachyderms!

The next problem was the passage through the Saltee Sound, between two islands with a frightening array of bits of geology waiting to trap the unwary mariner, a passage which can normally be dodged by taking a shortcut to the North through a gap called St. Patrick's Bridge, but only from March to September, after which the buoys are removed for the winter. It put years on my already superannuated frame, because it wasn't sensible to rely on Satnav in such a dangerous bit of water, I had to do it by carefully reading the Pilot Book, then following the instructions exactly, after committing them to memory because there isn't time to look at a book in the passage. Imagine my delight when I turned North after getting through the Sound to pass the buoys, which had not been removed yet!

Alongside at 1645, feeling absolutely shredded, I had a cup of coffee from my flask (I hadn't been able to pour it out safely for the last three hours), finished the log and tidied up my gear. This is a charming little place, a busy fishing village with thatched cottages, friendly people. Eaten in the harbour for my evening meal, which allowed me to write up the day's log. Well, I'm still fine physically, and the



Kilmore Quay

Technical Support

Once again we enter the autumn lay up with more reports of problems to be fixed before next season. The list always seems to get longer!

NC hydraulic steering: Whilst under sail the helm started to behave erratically and required 3 turns to hard a' port and eleven to hard a' starboard. To make things worse the starboard included 'a dead band' where the rudder did not move at all (the rudder responded to the autopilot normally). Sometime later an engineer removed the aft helm pump unit and stuffed rag into the pipes to prevent oil leaking out. The helm pump was 'checked' and reinstalled but the problem persisted and it now became impossible to bleed air out of the system. Both pumps and the hydraulic ram were sent to Hypro Marine for a thorough service and they eventually found bits of rag or J cloth in all three units. On reassembling the system the fault persisted and so the autopilot electric pump was removed and returned to Raymarine for service. A bent spring in the starboard valve was replaced after which the steering and bleeding faults disappeared. We can only surmise as to the sequence of events but it is certain that the fault in the autopilot pump was obscured by the fact that it functioned normally when responding to autopilot commands. If you experience a similar problem it is worth remembering that there are valves linking port and starboard sides of the system in both helm pumps and the autopilot pump. Initial action should be to turn off the fluid isolation cocks either side of the autopilot electric pump. Interestingly, the aft helm pump had a two way lever (sailing valve) that provided either normal operation or alternatively, feedback from the rudder with both helms rotating together. It was hidden from view behind the panel. This report refers to the Sea Star/Capilano/Teleflex system 1250V/1275VS (yellow) helm pump units.

Steering becomes stiff over a period of years: A timely reminder that we have experienced a number of cases of increasingly stiff steering in all NC types. If the helm cannot be easily turned with one finger then suspect the hydraulic steering ram is slowly ceasing up. Some Capilano/Teleflex rams have a plastic seal carrier moulded onto

the centre of the piston rod and this material seems to absorb automatic transmission fluid. The plastic expands and eventually jams the two seals tightly in the tube. Rectify the fault by dismantling and getting an engineering firm to turn down the plastic seal carrier and equally the grooves that the seals sit in. New piston rods are very Expensive.

Propellers and propeller shafts. Following another bent propeller in an NC38 (Greece) we have negotiated a special Association price for NCs 33/38/40/42/44 of £400 + VAT for a balanced class 1 (best) replacement made from NiBrAl. Duncan Propellers Ltd is a well established manufacturer making large ships propellers as well as those for small boats. They also produce shafts to order at a most competitive price. www.duncanpropellers.com or sales@duncanpropellers.com Original propellers fitted by Nauticat have the word 'Federal' stamped on the hub at the root of one of the blades. www.michiganwheel.com



Nauticat Association member visiting Duncan Propellers Ltd

NCs with combined switch/circuit breakers in the pilothouse panel. These were installed during the eighties and early nineties. Replacements are available at £6.72 + VAT and postage from Abacus Group, who are the UK distributors for American Airpax switches. Contact Alex Shawcat, Abacus Group, Encombe House, Hargreaves Way, Scunthorpe, DN15 8RF Tel: 01724 408 700 Airpax UK 01903 209 099

Odours from toilet hoses. Jabsco recommend 10 slow hand pumps of the toilet flush for each metre of discharge hose. On an NC33 the forward toilet requires 20 pumps to conform to this rule and we have experienced no bad odours after 10 years of use.

Gustavson and Lehman engines: Just a note to remind owners that these engines remain fully supported with spare parts. Boso Motor AB (Stockholm) support the Gustavson marinisation package and although their parts are expensive at least everything is still available. Lehman/Sabre/Perkins are now part of Caterpillar Inc.

We try to help you maintain your boat within a tight budget and every reported ‘disaster’ is a useful lesson for someone else. It’s surprising how often we visit the well known problems but the real success of Technical Support depends on feedback that can be passed onto you – the members. We never attribute any report to a specific boat or owner’s name.

Wishing you all a Happy Christmas and enjoyable New Year.

Best regards Richard Bartlett

01395 232789 rgbartlett@aol.com

Grace

At every gathering of the Nauticat Association where he have a formal dinner Grace is said before we dine. For those of our members who are never lucky enough to attend such a gathering I am printing below the words of the Nauticat Grace composed by Scott Rae a chaplain and brother of our former South Coast Secretary, Colvin Rae.

Grace

O Lord of earth and sky and sea

We offer up in prayer to thee

For course and speed and tidal calculation

Our humble praise and adoration

To bless this food and each libation

And bless this Nauticat Association

Disclaimer

Neither the Organisers of any event, nor the Nauticat Association shall be held liable for any loss, damage or personal injury, howsoever caused, arising from or in connection with any event.

Memories Are Made of This

It's been almost ten years since we sailed Taiva from Finland to Scotland. This has been a glorious time for Lee and me and I've written these few words to encourage those that may not yet have found the time to venture further afield to have a go.

After having taken so long to choose our boat we were not surprised to discover she was everything we'd hoped she would be. Sea-kindly, incredibly roomy and as Kaj had promised, faster than we'd expected. Taiva was the first 331 to have the deeper lead keel fitted and over the years she has never failed to amaze us with her stability, stiffness and speed.

Kaj called me a "dial-a-maniac" when I described the instrumentation I wanted. However, with just two of us aboard, all the gizmos are like having another skipper, and with a sea mist coming down and a three knot current pushing you sideways approaching a narrow entrance a chart plotter, DGPS and radar, really helps keep your heart in the right place.

There are few changes I would have made to our original specification but on reflection an outside fresh water shower and anchor chain seawater pump would have been useful. Despite Patrick's disgust I would have also gone for an in-mast mizzen and extra port side gas storage would have saved us wandering around the more out of the way places we visited searching for gas.

We prefer to spend our time outside marinas so we fitted two thin solar panels on the wheel house roof and these were enough to power the fridge and lighting whilst at anchor. And with an extra domestic battery fitted we could also make long passages under sail and not worry about the autopilot etc "sucking" us dry. Taiva was fitted with stereo radio and TV and was indeed a home from home.

Taiva is definitely a yacht, yes she has a big engine, but for us, the real fun is buzzing along at six knots or so with just the sound of gushing water as a background to our reading. Our journey from Finland took us four months with lots of stops and several return trips to the UK but by the time we arrived at Kip Marina, our home base for four years in Scotland, we knew our choice of a Nauticat had been a sound one.

For those of you who have not yet sailed Scotland, you're in for a treat, it really is one of the most beautiful cruising areas in the world and don't believe all that nonsense about midges and rain. Lee and I have been sailing the Hebrides for more than forty years and the weather is very often lovely, especially in May and September.

Highlights of the last ten years have been incredibly numerous but off the top of our heads; the Eastern islands of Sweden in spring were a mass of wild flowers and as the Scandinavians don't appear before July / August, they're all yours. The Gorta canal that crosses Sweden is an incredible journey of canals, rivers and lakes, the scenery is truly amazing but even more so is the friendliness of the locals.



We sailed along the West Coast of Sweden in July and couldn't get over the kami-kaze tactics of the newly arrived local sailors, understandable I suppose as they're only out for a couple of months or so. Southern Norway was another scenic delight and whilst sailing the Blindlae we were presented with a

pile of charts which gave us another chance to share our much appreciated whisky (£50 a bottle in Norway, only sold from special shops from chaps in long white overalls!). Of all the people we met the Norwegians were probably the most generous.

Lee and I were a little worried about crossing the North Sea so we called in our sea-sick proof youngest son to assist. By the time he arrived in Bergen he'd brought a great high pressure zone with him and the sea was like a mill-pond, we motored to the Shetlands in less than thirty hours and Daniel nearly eat all our stores!

Scotland was a joy, we stayed for four years and sailed around all the islands, the climax being our trip to St Kilda, where we enjoyed the best weather they'd had in ten years. It was during this time that Taiva

really increased our sailing confidence. The winds and tides could be ferocious but no matter where we were there was always a safe and still anchorage, this was sailing and exploring at its best. Add in some of the most beautifully situated inns, good food and friendly people and you'd be hard pushed to find anywhere better to keep a boat.

It was our children who finally declared that we had to venture South and so we did. The West Coast of the UK is an eclectic mix of delights, we loved Wales and Cornwall, however, by the time we reached the South Coast and the crowds we were pleased to be heading across to the Channel Islands. Lovely place to keep a boat (VAT free?), enjoyed Sark despite the incredible thunder storm we experienced and for the first time felt, yes, we're going foreign.



The French Coast was interesting and the islands well tended with good walking paths, but oh the crowds, having left Scotland it took some getting used to the "wall to wall" glass of the boats parked around us. The sheltered Morbi-

han was fun, especially our trip up river / canal to Vanne and following a tip from a local another trip up river / canal to Chateaulain enabled us to stay parked free against a pontoon all winter with the blessings of the local council.

The Rhias of Spain offered seclusion and protection and once again the locals proved to be warm and generous. As we turned South again at Galicea we found out why this area is world famous for its fish restaurants, although I'm really a carnivore, even I recognised this was the real deal. We promised ourselves we would return to this part of the

world again for here were some of the best walking trails anywhere in Europe.

We were lucky travelling down the Spanish and Portuguese coasts, a Northerly winds stuck to our backs for three weeks and we rarely used the engine. We hired a car in Portugal and enjoyed driving into the hills above Lisbon and it was here that we made our decision, following the arrival of our first grandchild that our crossing the "pond" wasn't going to happen. So turning left towards Gibraltar with a huge pod of dolphins leading the way we entered the Med' with great expectation.

Quite a few people had told us the Med' would be a huge let down, well it proves beauty really is in the eye of the beholder. To date we've had a ball. First of all the weather, there is definitely something to be said for wearing the same pair of shorts for a month and a deep golden sun tan does make you look ten years younger, or so my lovely wife tells me. The Balearics are still stunning, especially the West Coast of Mallorca, but I have to say, where we are now, is for me, almost as good as Scotland. Sardinia is still unspoilt, with a coastline that boasts incredible beaches and stunning mountain backdrops, interesting islands positioned in every wind direction, it's a sailing paradise.

With Corsica just twelve miles from our marina and a two hour flight direct from Liverpool to Alghero, this is probably as good as it gets so we don't think we'll be heading further East.

Jeff and Lee Bracey

TAIVA

Deadline for next issue is
6th March 2008.
Copy can be sent by e-mail or to:
44 Hill Avenue, Hazlemere,
Bucks HP15 7JU.
Photographs, including digital,
very welcome



Rally Greece

Q: When is a Nauticat Rally not a Rally?

A: When it's in the Med' !!

Well we really did try, but it just didn't seem to work.

When the question of Rallies came up at the AGM this year, both Sally Dorran and Michael Fraser-Hopewell promised they would try and organise a rally in Greece this year.

On the face of it, it should have been easy.

- Firstly there are plenty of Nauticats (International) and Nauticat Association members in and around Lefkas in Greece.
- We are all liveaboards or extended cruisers with theoretically no other calls on our time (like work/holidays etc)
- Jan Dennett ("Neridos") who along with husband Ray started the Nauticat Association, ran it almost single-handedly for many years and organised the first (and many more) rallies **is based in Lefkas.**



We (*Michael and Helen Fraser-Hopewell* "Unda") arrived in Lefkas in early June having left Ostia, near to Rome, in early April. We made our way down the west coast of Italy to Sicily, then up the East coast, crossing the Ionian to Lefkas from Crotone. Jan and Ray came alongside to greet us when we entered the Lefkas "canal", having just launched "Neridos", and were off for a inaugural cruise.

Jan, keen as ever to take on the burden of organisation, put out the word to local Nauticats that a rally was in the offing.

We returned to the UK for July and August to escape the brutal heat (45° plus) and the deadly flotillas, returning by car early August.

Just as we boarded the ferry in Venice for Igoumenitsa a text came in from Jan....*Rally organised in four days time, meeting Megannisi noon.* Such excitement as we drove post-haste from Igoumenitsa to Lefkas, stopping only at Lidl to stock with essential supplies (you only go to Lidl to buy booze).

It was such a relief to get back to sunny Greece after the utterly miserable wet and cold August in the UK. Glorious blue skies and sea as we washed the summers dust of “Unda” (it hadn’t rained for nearly three months).

Jan came round to report, “Sally is Nauticatless but has chartered a yacht from Corfu and should be on their way in time for the rally, Barry and Sandra on “Giwa Rua” had arrived from Croatia and were in the Marina, and a wide assortment of Nauticats from Sweden, France and Denmark were geared up to attend.

The anchorage Jan had chosen was known to all of us as “Bar B Q Bay” an utterly delightful spot, well sheltered, clearest blue water and plenty of room. Nobody, except Sally, had to travel more than ten miles.....what could go wrong?

The weather, that’s what. After three months of unbroken sunshine in came the forecast. The wind had gone round to the South (usually consistent Northerly) and a hell of a blow from the Aegean was on it’s way.....and boy did it come.

Poor Sally was stuck up in Corfu and us Nauticats were either holed up in Lefkas in the Marina or town Quay, or various bolthole anchorages around the area.

It p*ssed with rain for the first time in three months; much to the delight of the parched locals. The only upside was it did come in time to put out the many and vicious fires raging in the Pelloponese only sixty odd miles away.

By the time the weather settled back to normal we had all dispersed, and within weeks the agenda really turned to haul outs for the winter, so the impetuous for a rally died away. Still, in those last few weeks we all seemed to make it down to that delightful anchorage for a final swim, and each time there always seemed to be at least one other Nauticat tucked in the corner.

Better luck next year eh?

Michael and Helen Fraser-Hopewell
Unda

Classified

Neridos

Nauticat 33 - Commissioned 1981

Hull No. 775 Part 1 Registered

Regretfully Neridos is for sale. Although a 1980 boat she has been continuously updated and maintained with an exhaustive list of gear and equipment less than 10 years old. She has, as well as the usual machinery, instrumentation and sails, a 4kw Zeise generator, a Candy 3.5kg automatic washing machine, 12/240v LCD TV and DVD Player, 2.7m RIB and 8hp outboard and all the essentials for living on board. The BIG jobs have been done - new epoxy coated steel fuel tanks, hull epoxied and Cop-percoated (2006). Not only a unique name but a unique boat.



For more details contact: neridos@hotmail.com or 0030 694 881 5254

Lying: Ionian Islands, Greece (flights to Corfu or Preveza)

Price: £ 69,995 VAT Paid

Classified

Yacht Carpe Diem

Nauticat 331 - Build year 2000

SSR 123882 Call Sign MPVR2 Hull No. 1200

Health reasons regrettably dictate sale. We purchased Carpe Diem last year in Finland, with kind assistance from Nauticat UK. She was, while in Finland, maintained and stored at Siltala's yard. She was used as showroom and demonstration boat and, on two occasions, also used for the Finnish equivalent of the Boat Show. Not surprisingly she is in immaculate condition. We have undertaken little more than short trips in getting to know the boat.



Accommodation is two double cabins with full size double beds, dressing tables, shelves and lockers. She has the wrap around settee with large table in the deck saloon. There is a separate walk in shower with hot water from engine or immersion heater.

Full electronic navigation with radar and autohelm package, as well as wind, with everything repeated at interior and exterior helming positions. Channel C card included. Engine is a 88hp Yanmar 4JH giving a cruising speed of 7-8 knots under power. Ketch rigged, sails are by Hood with roller reefing main and jib by Seldon. A bow thruster, anchor windless, holding tank and Erberspacher heating are fitted. Otherwise she has everything normally associated with a 331, including teak decks. New dinghy, outboard and fully serviced life raft included. A detailed written spec available by email or post

Offers considered based on £155,000

John & Sue Walters Tel: 07967 508563 email: jwdrafts@aol.com

Located Ipswich in a marina berth.

Classified

'Bold Bendigo'

Nauticat 44 Ketch 1995



Pilothouse with chart table and helmsman's seat.

Galley with fridge, deepfreeze and microwave.

Dinette with teak table and seating for six.

Forward Cabin with V berth and infill, built-in cupboard and seat, huge storage space.

Large Aft Cabin with central double berth, en-suite heads with separate shower; lots of storage space.

Equipment includes 3 batteries, 40 amp charger, Philips DGPS, Raytheon GPS, ST6000 Autopilot, I-com 601, VHF/DSC, ICS Navtex, Raytheon R21 Radar, Raytheon 650 plotter.

Perkins 135hp diesel engine plus £300 Perkins spares.

Bow Thruster with inside and aft deck controls.

Warm air heating, See-me radar enhancer enhances the signal whose radar picks me up and many other features and equipment.

I have recently expended some £2,000 on the boat and additionally had the hull anti-fouled and polished and the engine serviced; she is now in A 1 condition.

Lying Chichester Marina

£220,000

Tel: Owner 01494 673 552

E-mail: d.hilton1@btinternet.com

Classified

Nauticat 40 Ketch 1986/7 'Cu Two'



Full suite of sails, inmast furling, bow thrusters, DSC, VHF & SSB radios, heating, air conditioning, Raymarine C80 radar/chart plotter, auto pilot, GPS, Navtex, fridge & deep freeze, cooker/oven, microwave, 90hp engine, 7.5kw Westerbeke generator, Inverter, Adverc charging system, davits & dinghy outboard.

(2 Atlantic crossings) Hull 400/42. Same owner since new.

Moored Dun Laoghaire Dublin

Tel: +353 1 285 8088

Mob: +353 868 104 104

Email: cutwoo@gmail.com

Vega

Nauticat 43 Ketch - build no. 75 - year 1989, commissioned 1990

Purchased 1999 from first owner. Sailed in Baltic, Med, Canaries and Ireland.

Now afloat Craobh Marina, Argyll, Scotland

Fully equipped, no bowthruster.

For health reasons I have to sell.

Price: £138.000

If interested, please contact me for details:

Thomas Tiedemann

e-mail: ttman@btinternet.com

Classified

Nauticat 33 - 1974 - Lying Castelsarrasin



In excellent condition – very much updated – a great live aboard and easy for canals.

Made in Finland: famous for a very strong top quality hull, ketch rigged, teak deck, professionally epoxied hull, new prop, cutless bearing and ‘Stripper’ (rope cutter) 2002.

Engine: 72HP Perkins (original), new starter motor, huge raw water strainer, reconditioned water pump and oil cooler, new exhaust system (all 2002) and auto 2Kg fire extinguisher.

Electrics: 12v high output Genie alternator, Xalt and Xsplit fully automated charging system, 315 amp/hours batteries plus separate starter battery, mains 40 amp charger, shore power, marine quality consumer box (RCD’s & MCB’s) 13 amp sockets throughout (all new 2002).

Instrumentation: Garmin fish finder, GPS (2002), ST6000 auto pilot, VHF radio, top quality six speaker CD and radio.

Heads: China sink, electric toilet (quiet) and shower all new 2004.

Tankage: SS diesel tanks 130 gals, SS water tank 50 gals, new pumps and pipes (all new 2002).

New carpets throughout in 2004.

Electric anchor winch, sails laundered and overhauled 2002 and cruising chute.

Zodiac dinghy with inflatable floor and keel. Mariner 4HP four stroke (3 hours) all new in 2002.

We have been living aboard since September 2002, crossing the channel and down through the French canals and rivers. As you can see from the above we have lavished much time, care and money on her to make life aboard as comfortable and convenient as possible. She has always given us total confidence and reliability. The only reason for sale is that Madame is not so agile now and can’t go sailing.

£42,000 ono

Richard Gibson 033 678 34 22 59

Classified

Nauticat 33 (Mk 1)

'STORNELLA'

'Stornella' has been lovingly restored over the last couple of years and the result is a beautiful 'go anywhere' motor sailer. Built in 1974 Stornella has huge internal living and storage space. There is a double forecabin, head and a hanging locker ahead of the spacious saloon which will convert to a double sleeping space.

The wheelhouse is a joy to behold giving superb protection and all round visibility. The sliding doors and huge 'sun roof' give plenty of circulating air in the summer. The rear double cabin also houses a sink, vanity unit and hanging locker. There is plenty of storage space throughout. Stornella is fully registered and has a **FORD Lehman 80 HP DIESEL**

When Stornella was last bought she was halfway through a renovation project, which has been lovingly completed by her present owners. She has been restored to a very high standard with an impressive inventory. The hull construction is fibreglass, with a beautiful wooden wheelhouse, which is in very good condition.

- The wooden decks were completely lifted; the deck floor reglued and the decking re-laid all done lovingly by hand!
- Complete re-wiring from the engine through to all equipment .
- New lights in aft cabin
- New control panel
- New Engine, Oil and Water dials
- Steering changed to Hydraulic
- New suit of sails
- Full hull scrape and gel coat
- New exhaust and silencer
- New V.H.F., GPS, Speed and Depth log
- Engine serviced and winterised every year



Currently lying at home port in **Marchwood Yacht Club, Southampton**

Please contact: Paul or Annemarie **017983 700526** evenings
or **0776 9696594** for further information or to view.

OIR of **£45,000**

FUTURE EVENTS

AGM Dinner

Novotel Bristol

2nd February 2008

East Coast Meet

16th and 17th May 2008

TECHNICAL MERCHANDISE

Perkins engine handbook	£2.00
Ford Lehman 2712 engine handbook	£2.00
Junkers water heater manual English	£1.00
Door roller wheels per set of 4	£10.00
Door roller wheels each	£3.00
Modified Gustavson/early Lehman engine anode holders that allow use of international standard anodes. Set of 2	£8.50