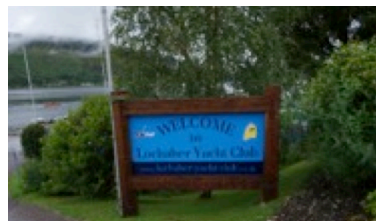




Telltale October 2014



FROM THE COMMODORE OCTOBER 2014

The weather for the latter part of the year was generally good but the associated light winds did not help the sailing. Monday evenings continued with only a few keel boats participating although a good number of keel boats were away cruising. I hope to see some cruising logs presented.

Wednesday evenings continued with a good turnout of up to nine dinghies. The setting of a suitable course sometimes proved difficult and often had to be shortened because of the light winds.

Thursday evenings were extremely popular with sometimes as many as eleven boats. The Sea Cadets were very active and Martin extremely busy with training.

The Challenger Traveller weekend (report and photos on page 4) was very successful and visitors, both sailors and helpers, all said the welcome, assistance and meals were excellent. Many thanks to all members who helped to make this a great weekend.

Thursday evening of the 11th September was the evening buffet cruise on Souter's Lass into Loch Eil.



An excellent buffet was provided and drinks served at the bar. The crew were very helpful and attentive and Robbie (MacKay) was at the helm for a while.





The weather was good with an almost clear setting sun.

All of the 25 members who joined the cruise enjoyed it very much and suggested that next year's booking be made now.

On the following Saturday and Sunday it was the keel boat muster. Six keel boats set sail for Loch Chorie where they anchored for the night. Drinks were at 18:00 followed by a short row to the Boathouse for an excellent meal (report on page 4).

A number of dinghies were afloat for "Bart's Bash" on Sunday the 21st September but due to lack of wind only two boats crossed the start line in the first half an hour. The other dinghies just slowly drifted with the ebb tide.

The Pursuit race took place in light airs on the 28th September with some eight dinghies and one keel boat racing. The race coincided with the RYA inspection. Martin Faulkner said the inspection and viewing of safety boat cover went very well with only two minor recommendations being made. Well done.

The AGM will be held on the 28th of October. I look forward to seeing you there.
(Richard Rumney, Commodore)

[Don's Sottise Cruise \(continuing the serialization of James Douglas's 2013 log\)](#)

Tuesday:

We leave Craighouse on a sunny morning under motor with light variable winds heading for Gigha. The navigation down the sound of Gigha is well marked and good fun. We enter the bay to fulfil a long held dream of the captain. This is his father's favourite Scottish Island and he had been to them all when Chief Coastguard 40 years ago. Gigha lies snugly off the Mull of Kintyre in its very special gulf stream microclimate.

We pick up a mooring in the idyllic bay. The azure sea over the sand shell bottom on a sunny day is the necklace of colour in front of the golden beaches. Gigha is verdant green beyond with yellow broom to give a spectacular zing to the scene. Captain and crew launch the dinghy over the davits and the trusty Yammy Ma Ha splutters into classic non PC 2 stroke action. We land on the dodgy dinghy jetty and are pleased to read of grand plans for a landing pontoon next year. No water chaps! The Boathouse Restaurant is stone built for generations and a welcome issue point for Mr Walls' finest.

Intrepid people in wetsuits and Kayaks on the sandy beach had similar ideas. Very nice when you are 35 but I think I prefer my Moody 35. We wander up the road heading for Ardmore house. This is the first week of June remember! The hedgerow flowers are cow parsley, bluebells, seapinks, campion and broom. Wow!

Gigha did the community buy out deal 15 years ago as an early adopter of land reform and clearly has an air of confidence and community in the summer sun. The gardens show pride, the hotel is in action and the road is slightly busy. We pass a hawthorn in spectacular white bloom, stone dykes, fertile fields with livestock grazing.

Ardmore house was "The Big House" of the estate and the owners had created a spectacular garden of exotic Victoria plants. Roddys and Azaleas feature strongly, but many other varieties too. The colours

are pink, orange, white, red and purple in big statement displays. The woodland paths have carpets of bluebells at their zenith with verdant luxuriant greens in the glades dappled by the sun. Remember the captain is on his Bluebell mission for www.bluebellgray.com! The number of photo opportunities would put a politician to shame! We climb to the view point on Gigha with a fabulous vista of Gigha over to Islay and Jura. Gigha most definitely the Jewel of the Inner Hebrides.

We return to Don's Sottise and dress for dinner. The Captain sets a brave example diving off the stern into the azure sea and returning smartly to the bathing steps at the stern. There are indeed some brass monkeys guarding the Gigha crown jewels. He should know better, but there is an annual tradition to keep up!

Dinner in the Boathouse is a jolly fine medley of seafood. A Blue Laddie 10 year special Islay dram in the cockpit is regarded as essential for strategic planning for navigation to the Isle of drams next morning.

Wednesday:

Another calm sunny day with not much wind as we motor to Port Ellen Islay. New cardinals in place. Keep well South for entrance taking a transit line between the lighthouse and radio mast on the hill. You have to keep south to avoid Texa island and the skerries.

The marina in Port Ellen is a touch industrial behind the RoRo and the port for distillery traffic, but this is refreshing honesty on an island and not prissy, pretty pretty.

Showers are in the White Hart Hotel which is a Scottish classic. Dark dated wallpaper in two halves and claymores on the wall. I am not sure the food would be any advance on chicken in the basket circa 1980. However the welcome was warm and the shower in the large separate bathroom was spacious. No en suites here! This touching retro charm was honest and if they have any sense they should keep it this way and it will become a classic in a few years which will attract a loyal following among quirky hotel buffs tired of corporate charm, seeking prawn cocktails. I can just see the car park full of Austin Allegros on their Classic Malts tour.

We visit the Spar and Post office with cheery locals, but generally looking a bit down at heel compared to say Mull. The beach in Port Ellen is attractive for local families playing on the sand. Balamory does not have a beach and is heaving with tourists, so again we are back to Port Ellen's simple unpretentious honesty. A bit like Fort William really, when everyone raves about Oban!

Back to the boat. We refill with water and stick to our lunch stop and victualing plan, heading for Jura and Craighouse again to keep up the pace. We are again mostly on motor and the captain sets an ergonomic challenge for the assembled crew of consulting engineers to while away the long hours on sea passage through the Islay Doldrums. His medical concern has been the back strain possible from an awkward outboard lift from the guard rail to the dinghy below. The resulting design of ropes to make a bra strap stop clearly has design inspiration from yonder Paps of Jura. We pick up a mooring in Craighouse alongside a singlehanded Moody 35 sister to Don's Sottisse. He is en passage from Anglesey to Orkney. Very impressive, but the captain would need to retire and gets easily bored by his own company! (Final instalment in the next Telltale)

Challenger Traveller Weekend: Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th September

Lochaber Yacht Club hosted the Challenger Traveller weekend for disabled sailors in the Challenger Trimarans. All sailors and helpers were delighted with the welcome received and with the well-organised event. Thanks to all LYC members who helped with catering, launch and recovery of the boats and provided safety cover. The weather was excellent and provided some fine sailing and closely contested races. The Facebook page 'Sailability Scotland' gives a good visual account of the weekend – a taster of the many photos taken is shown below.



Challenger Trimarans preparing ashore: launching: and racing in one of many races over the weekend.

Keelboat Muster: Saturday 13th September: Report from Keelboat Convener, Hamish Loudon

The Keelboat Muster was arranged at comparatively short notice but six yachts gathered in Loch Choire. Lydia, Harrier, Hapara, Fumarole, Minuet and Schonbrunn all (well nearly all) found a mooring buoy off the Boathouse restaurant. At "Gin O'clock" Lydia hosted the thirsty sailors, (see photie), for aperitifs to stimulate the appetites. A very short voyage by Inflatable and all fourteen sailors were seated in the Boathouse for an excellent dinner. In true maritime tradition the Port was passed (courtesy of Steve Gillion) and the toast was "Lochaber Yacht Club" in its sixtieth year. Another four yachts were away cruising so next year we have the potential for a ten boat Muster! Perhaps more as we have twenty yachts listed in the handbook.



Sailors enjoy pre-dinner drinks aboard Lydia

News from the Archives -1991

Thanks to Hamish Loudon for scouring the LYC archives of Telltale and finding this gem (below) from 1991. Is anyone else sitting on other historic and amusing logs? Anyone up for the challenge posed in the last paragraph? Maybe in summer 2015?

ACADEME AFLOAT

ice?
McKinna

My final duty as commodore of the St. Andrews University Sailing Club was to organise the annual cruise as cheaply as possible. I came up with six days of camping and the very mixed fleet of the syndicate soling "Scapa", my veteran majestic flagship and a sea cadet bosun. A few highlights from the log:

SATURDAY JUNE 8th: Arrive off Cuilcheanna to rendezvous with the party from Glasgow. Coming alongside the majestic flagship, the bosun mainsheet snags on the anchor fairlead and the boat lies down and dies. As I struggle in the water with the rope, I glimpse "Scapa", clearly not under command, careering towards Cuilcheanna Spit as she drags her anchor. Having righted the bosun, we then see her beating hopefully towards the Ballachulish Bridge to seek a better anchorage in the rising Southeasterly. The soling swiftly becomes invisible in the gathering murk as we set off in sodden pursuit.

After twenty minutes, just when I'm wondering if "Scapa" has run into one of the Admiralty buoys and sunk, we find her on someone's mooring off the Onich Hotel, muttering reproachfully about inadequate anchors. I announce that we have left one of the tents and all of the food aboard the majestic flagship. There are signs of a crisis of confidence in the leadership, and this is not assuaged when I cheerfully reassure them that we can sleep in the Callart Mausoleum. There is obviously only one thing to be done, so we retreat to the bar of the Onich Hotel where we find the Glasgow contingent, who have been watching in fascination for the past hour.

Thus fortified, we set out for Callart by road and arrive at midnight. I lead a doubtful company into the forest and up Mausoleum Hill as the wind moans in the branches and the owls call in the distance. The tomb emerges from the trees, the graves before it standing stark against the lowering sky. A gust roars through the leaves. All it lacks is a flight of bats. Unsurprisingly, most favour a camp, but less horrific, night in the remaining tents, but three of us bed down under a window that morbidly proclaims "Death where is now thy Sting?" for a macabre night with the last of the Camerons of Callart.

MONDAY JUNE 10th: Wake up to find the busun has disappeared with the tide. We find it a mile along the beach and full of water because the bung was left out to drain it...determined not to be caught out again, that night we moor it on a long painter tied to a small jetty on the beach at Shuna.

TUESDAY JUNE 11th: Morning reveals the pier hugh and dry and, perched on top like a sculpture on a plinth, the bosun. Now the great benefit of a university education is of course that one's mind is trained to tackle any intellectual problem...so we decide to wait for the tide to come back in, until someone has the bright idea of borrowing a gate from the sheep pens. With this propped against the jetty, the boat is slid down it onto the beach.

In six days we managed only as far as Port Appin and sailed through days of dismal rain and calm. Nevertheless, people were impressed with such an ideal dinghy cruising ground so empty; perhaps LYC should try to resuscitate its dinghy cruising weekends. It seems odd that the Black Rock Race is as far as most of us get, when our water is so much appreciated by everyone else.

IAIN LOUDON.

Bart's Bash: 21st September

Lochaber Yacht Club's expectant dinghy sailors came ready to participate in 'Bart's Bash'. This was an international event as part of the Andrew Simpson Sailing Foundation's fund-raising, world record attempt to get the most sailors competing at the same time, while raising much needed cash for the foundation's aims. The day was warm and sunny in Fort William with bright blue skies but, sadly, no wind for the appointed race start and the race was eventually abandoned, as noted by the Commodore, because only 2 dinghies actually managed to cross the start line, never mind finish! Well, we tried!

Eventually, when all seemed lost, the sailors cheered as the wind finally blew and a fine afternoon of fun sailing began. Some of the younger members took an opportunity to practice their capsize technique, such was the warmth of the day. Hopefully this event will become part of the LYC annual calendar.



Dinghies prepare for Bart's Bash



Lucy brings cakes - 'For me? How kind!'



Dinghies afloat, but the keelboat's reflection tells the real story



Dates for the diary:

AGM: Tuesday 28th October at the Yacht Club: all members are encouraged to attend to hear reports presented of this past year's events, and to elect the new committee members for 2014/15.

Following the AGM the Commodore will lead discussion of plans for the coming year. All members are welcome and encouraged to contribute.

Annual dinner and prize giving: Friday 28th November:

The annual dinner and prize giving will take place at the Moorings Hotel, Banavie, on Friday 28th November and will include a buffet and ceilidh. More details to follow but put the date in your diary!

Pioneer Propeller



....oops, the well-battered Pioneer's propeller costs the equivalent of a single membership to get it repaired. The spare is now fitted for the remainder of the season.

Training Report (Thanks to Martin Faulkner)

57 degrees North, 5 degrees West, 10 Degrees Celsius

Congratulations! Ben Lennon, Jackie Bushnell and Linda Poll for completing their RYA Level Two in October. As ever, the capsize drill proved to be the most . . . stimulating and dramatic part of the course. Time in the season was running out, so we had to bite the bullet and do the wet capsize in 'real' conditions rather than the more pleasant flat calm with sun. 'Real' in that there were waves, gusts, a bit of rain and a boat that is relatively easy to capsize. "How do you make it capsize?" "Oh, it's fairly easy. I just stand in the wrong place."

Other bits of spice were thrown in. Jackie was first up (self volunteered!) and so had the distinct honour of finding out without warning how cold the water is – especially when a gust decides to help the boat drag one through the water. The boom came off the mast for Linda, and Ben had to help the fairly tired instructor into the boat. Masterchef is never this exciting! Many thanks to Jim Shearer and Robbie MacKay for staying out on the Safety Boat for a little bit longer. I've never been so pleased to get a tow!

That makes eight new adult sailors for this year, with Lucy Ballantyne, Kenny Clark, Emma Parton, Louise MacAdam and Tracy Cameron topping out in July. It was particularly good to see Kenny and Lucy racing this summer, and in a fit of sensible-ness (if such a word exists) they've bought their own boat (an RS400). They were 'flying along' at Loch Tummel last weekend! We'd better start making our own starts a bit better to avoid being shown up.

A great season for Junior training too. They've logged way over 500 hours this year. Four Stage Ones, five Stage Twos, a couple of Threes and a Four. And to top it off, people using the Feva gennakers in races.

Look out for word during the Winter on an Assistant Instructor course and First Aid. Is there any interest in a course for the RYA diesel engine, or RYA VHF? If you are interested in any of these let Martin Faulkner know.

In the meantime, I'm going to have a bit of a rest.

EDITOR COMMENT: Thanks to Martin and the team of instructors for their time, expertise, dedication and energy this season - much appreciated by all!

RYA Inspection

Further to Martin's training report we are delighted to hear that the recent RYA Training Inspection went smoothly, with very many positive comments being made. The result of the inspection was that LCY had its Training Centre licence renewed and I understand that the assessor was heard to say "Good job!" so, from Telltale also – 'Good job – and very well done!

More gems from archives of the 1991 LYC Telltale again, thanks to Hamish

NOTICE TO MARINERS

I see that you are noticing changes in the navigation lights round the west coast. May be these two stories would interest you, both about Bo Fascadale.

1. Sometime in the 1950's a young naval officer, in command of his first ship, checked the position of many of the navigation beacons on the west coast, and discovered that the light on Bo Fascadale was some 2 - 3 cables out of its charted position. Of course, he sent a protest to the Northern Lighthouse Commission, but they replied - Yes, they had shifted it two years ago - and had notified the Admiralty - who no doubt would have notified all HM Ships ? It's not our fault if you don't correct your charts!

BO FASCADALE

2. Old Hugh MacKenzie, Kilmory, Ardinamurchan, looked north over the dangerous sea between him and the Islands of Muck and Rum. In the middle of this water sticks up the rock of Bo Fascadale (the Cow of Fascadale) always just below water, but marked by a lighted buoy, courtesy of C of N Lt.

One evening, walking his usual path from his home to his byre, he looked again at the flashing light and thought - that is not right. So he stood still, and sure enough the light was moving - it had broken loose!

Hugh wasted no time - it was 4.30pm when he phoned the coastguard, and the information was on the 6 o'clock news that night that the light was adrift. It was picked up near Mallaig next morning!

Do you have a story from 2014 for publication in LYC Telltale which will be recorded and perhaps unearthed for the centenary celebrations - only another 40 years away?! Surely some of our current young (and not so young!) members will enjoy looking back at what was achieved by them in 2014?

Next Telltale: Many thanks to all who contributed to this Telltale, either through providing pictures or stories, or by being active and present at some of the events recorded. That's what makes LYC such a great club! All items of interest for the next Telltale gratefully received: please send to stephaniecjames@hotmail.com.

New members are always extremely welcome, whether you are an experienced sailor or want to join in the fun and learn to sail. Over the winter months you are very welcome to visit the clubhouse on Achintore Road on any Thursday morning after 10am to find out more.