

Hurley Owners Association

Chairman's Annual Report 2013

The first thing which strikes me about 2013 was that, at last, we had a decent sailing summer! I do hope you all managed a good season and were able to take advantage of the fair weather. From reports of rallies and individual cruises, it would seem to have been another active year for HOA members. Some of these have been reported in the newsletter and there is still time to get more of these into the Spring edition, so please do let the editorial team have your offerings.

The news at the start of the HOA year was dominated, quite rightly, by the sad death of Ian Anderson. This has all been reported in the June newsletter and is well documented on the website. Suffice it to say that this difficult time in any family's life was mercifully short. HOA members paid their respects and have left a good impression with Ian's family.

We had an interesting AGM in February, where we were delighted to meet David Reeves, a former draughtsman and manager of Hurley Marine, who gave us an insightful talk. Also at the AGM we agreed a revised set of HOA Rules, which have given us a clearer and more easily understood administrative basis for the running of the Association. You can read these under 'Membership' on the web site.

It has been a difficult year for the newsletter. We were most grateful to Ian Sinclair for producing a March edition as temporary editor but were, at the time, still searching for someone to fill the role on a long-term basis. So the Committee were very grateful to Ian Lowe for stepping up in March and his first edition duly came out in June. However, poor Ian suffered a nasty accident in the summer which laid him up for sometime. On the positive side, we hope that the others of the editorial team will be able to take some of the load for future editions.

The committee are constantly seeking ways to increase the benefit of belonging to HOA. One area which has gone from strength to strength is the website. Earlier in the year Rod put a lot of effort in to tidying-up the technical and FAQ sections and had produced an integrated area which contains masses of really useful information, contributed by members over the years. In addition, this year saw the uploading of a number of reports on Hurley boats taken from the yachting press and a fairly comprehensive set of Ian Anderson's original design drawings.

The other 'big idea' this year was the photo competition. This was something of an experiment but intended to generate interest and, specifically, to produce high quality images of Hurley boats which members would enjoy and which would provide a source of pictures for the calendar. I think we succeeded, with over 20 entries, although I admit we did expect more members to vote. In the end we had 59 votes, spread across 21 photos. Given a membership of about 250, this has left the committee wondering how to engage those of you who did not vote. We used an e-mail-based system, which was scarcely any trouble for those voting but did give the counting team a few headaches! We will be looking at alternative means of voting for next year. I would like to encourage you all to take your camera with you when you are anywhere near your boat, or anyone else's boat, to be inventive, creative and see if we can continue to produce ever more interesting and exciting pictures of our classic boats – and their crew!

The other 'big issue' which we regularly discuss in committee is how to engage HOA members in the activities of the Association. With a turn-over of some 60 – 80 members per year out of a total of about 250, this is a difficult area. The life of the Association, such as it is, is wholly dependent upon the contributions of the members. We are primarily a networking organisation – by which I mean one whose main role is to put people in touch with each other, provide helpful information and a forum for discussion. Our role is not primarily to organise events, but to facilitate them, through the members list, website and newsletter. In fact our rules make it clear that rallies or similar events are the responsibility of the people taking part, not the HOA as such.

Now, the geography of the UK and the distribution of HOA members is clearly weighted towards the South Coast, so it can appear that the southern members rather dominate events. I wish to emphasise and be clear, this is not because there is a 'south coast clique' as one member had suggested – there is no clique – anyone and everyone may participate and organise events as they see fit and members are more than welcome to engage in the running of HOA to whatever degree they are able.

I would also like to repeat something I have said before. The AGM is held in Plymouth mainly because this is where we get the largest number of attendees, generally about 20 (it being important that a fair number of members are present to scrutinise the administration of the HOA and quiz the committee as necessary). However, if in any other area of the country, a group of members would like to organise a dry meet to discuss issues, ideas, have talks and presentations, plus the obligatory lunch and boat-chat, then funds can be made available for room hire etc. Also, if you wish, some members of the committee can be made available to attend and give an account of how we run HOA. Basically – it is up to you - the members.

Finally on this topic, I am encouraged by the good number of members who are not on the South Coast but who regularly contribute by means of the Yahoo forum and the newsletter and themselves encourage and help others with their boats.

As a parting shot – I would like to 'plug' HOA merchandise. Burgees, calendars and, soon to be added, sweatshirts and baseball caps. Oh – I nearly forgot – I still have plenty of copies of A History of Hurley Marine available – a snip at £10 for members.

Best wishes for your winter layup

Tim Sharman



Phil Kirby (left) and me onboard Magatha (H30) in June 2013