



Camping week report – August 2015

Wow what a week!

The weather was brilliant and we enjoyed some great company and even better sailing.

16 campers stayed at various times during the week and after last weekend's sailing we started the week off with a chilled film night as over 20 watched "The Boat that rocked" on our very own big screen – thanks Rob Smith.

Campers sailed, kayaked or swam daily and were joined by other members – great to see the club in full use. Many forays were made up the swale in the strong winds early in the week to hone sailing skills in preparation for the tough events that followed.

On Thursday we had our annual youngster's day – and despite it blowing a force 5 gusting 6 to start with, we had plenty of boats out on the water. Practice launches, landings, tacking and jibing along with close sailing was followed by three short one lap races. Special mention goes to the helms of Charlie Jones, Henry Carter and Harry Adams but pride of the fleet award goes to Alexander Betts who kept Charlie at bay to win all three races. And not a capsize by anyone in sight! Brilliant effort!



Friday was pirate's day. Arrghhhh! The fancy dress this year was amazing – Julie and Steve Lott went all out but the special award must go to Bob Walker and his grandchildren. Bob was the most excited of everyone – what with his reduced price Johnny Depp outfit (we do need a photo Bob) and the unerring pirate swagger – it was brilliant! The turnout was great and 19 boats (best year yet) set sail for Shellness after a very serious briefing session (some of the questioning was tough). The winds were light and much joviality occurred on route with water pistols (I'm sure some were cannons) giving most sailors a soaking – but of course landing and taking the island is a serious business. A south easterly approach was made with Charlie making first landing to secure the beach. This was quickly followed by over 30 marauding SSC pirates racing up the beach securing booty (shells), drinking rum (coke) and stacking our annual claim to all things Sheppey (gawd help us) from the highest ground around (the local concrete pill box). We parlayed with the locals who wished to make peace- but of course we had none of that and set sail for home after gorging ourselves on pieces of 8 (sweeties). That evening we enjoyed BBQ parrot (tastes like chicken) swilled down with grog as over 30 pirates out fought each other as the tales of daring do got taller and taller.



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Saturday saw us finally achieve a two tide cruise – 11 sailors and a PB (thanks Dave L and Dave C) met at 7am and rigged six boats. A beautiful morning greeted us but with not a spot of wind in sight we had some reservations that we would struggle to get to Whitstable let alone further afield, but still we set our plans for an easterly coastal cruise. But mercy – immediately on launching our boats an easterly F3/4 wind kicked in and we set sail along the coast past Whitstable. Our plan to stay close together (sorry Dave we did try) was very quickly blown out the water as we all tacked in different directions. Along route Mr Wrigley decided he wanted to visit his old stomping ground, so faking a chill (clever dog) he forced Steve and Julie to land their Wanderer at Tankerton. One down but still 5 bravely sailed on. Four catamarans (Ian/Valerie, John/Dave, Andy/Henry and Robin) met up alongside Herne Bay Pier and after contacting John Fairclough in the Weta (who was taking an attractive scenic route) we agreed we would forge on to Minnis Bay with John following. The sail from Herne Bay to Minnis was fantastic and all the remaining five boats and the PB landed on the silvery sand around 1215 to the bemusement of many holiday makers. Jane Bainbridge met us (a big thanks as she was a well needed road crew) and we enjoyed a terrific BBQ and the soaking of some rays for a couple of hours or so. We set sail to return home around 245 and decided that the easterly wind favoured a route via the wind farm. It was great to visit but not so pleasant to be chased off by the wind farm police - Valerie and I were a tad concerned as a large patrol boat bore down on us! The blast back was lumpy but very fast and we made SSC by 445, having to pull our boats across the mud and shells from just inside the club pole. But what a day – more of these next year please we all cried through the pain!



Sunday saw our summer walk and picnic. Ten of us meandered up the Swale spotting seals and all types of birds (just ask Johnny B which was his favourite- I know mine) followed by a walk across the Seasalter flats and farmland with an arrival back to the clubhouse some three hours later. Thanks Jane B for setting the route and looking out for us. The picnic on the balcony was a great way to end to the week and I hope that everyone who stayed or who dipped in and out of the last 10 days enjoyed it all as much as I have. Thank you all and please come along to our next events – the training and dinghy regatta this weekend – the more the merrier.

I an On behalf of SSC Committee