

The Tomahawk

The bulletin of the Tomahawk Owners Association

August 2008

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Editorial

Despite the blustery weather, TOA rallies have gone ahead and this issue of the Bulletin gives reports of the Yarmouth and east Coast events as well as the Cross Channel 'rally' – which featured only one boat and that not a Tomahawk! The Round the Island Race usually includes a number of Tomahawks and I've included my (first time) impressions in this issue. Also included are some articles on Mast Step solutions and Cockpit Reefing; if you would have made some modifications to your Tomahawk and would like to contribute, please contact me – I'm always on the lookout for Bulletin material!

Gordon Keyte, jengo@talk21.com

Yarmouth Rally – June 2008

Mid June already and a spell of fine weather promised, well, occasional showers anyway, could only mean that the Tomahawks were out in the Solent and headed for Yarmouth at the western end of the Isle of Wight (not to be confused with its East Anglian namesake). This trip, organised by former commodore Bill Garrod, coincided with the Isle of Wight music festival at Newport where several well known bands had been booked guaranteeing a large audience. Would there be an overspill of yachtees seeking refuge from the Medina? Well surprisingly no! Not that it would have mattered as we can party with anyone! Bill had the foresight to book us in on Harold Hayles pontoon berths as the HM at Yarmouth, whilst excellent in most ways, cannot be induced to reserve berths for visitors.

Our "billet" was also conveniently attached to the shore which obviated the use of the water taxi which can have its own particular hazards late at night!

Squaw with Roland Liddell and Tony B crewing was the first to arrive at 1245hrs. Making the passage from Hythe (Southampton) in 3.5 hrs. into a freshening westerly wind.

Tony and Ruth Hepworth in *Bumble B.* and *Betina* (Not a Tomahawk) with Bill and Gloria Garrod crewed by their grand-daughter followed in short order from Portsmouth, with a third Tomahawk expected. Greetings, tea taking and a moderate siesta saw the sun approaching the yard arm. This generated something of a bustle of garment changing and the arrival of John and Chris, new members from Lymington in *Spinola*.

Our evening began with a stroll to the Bugle Inn which stands on the east side of the town square. Despite the inevitable effect of tourism on the port, Yarmouth is a place of character and history with many interesting old buildings. Not least of which is the town pier. This is the oldest wooden pier in the British Isles which has recently undergone extensive renovation and

replacement of many of its supporting timbers which had become infested with the “Gribble” worm. The pier was formerly, amongst other activities, used as a link for boat passengers of the old Southern Railway between Lymington and the western island. Today it is still used by ferry passengers of the summer visitor *Waverley* and other Solent based passenger boats.

The Royal Solent Yacht Club has its premises on the waterfront adjacent to the pier and where visiting affiliated yachtsmen can enjoy solid and liquid refreshment at a price.

Our surroundings for the evening were accommodating and old and new acquaintances nurtured. It was particularly good to see new faces and at this juncture appropriate to encourage other members, who keep boats in the Solent and the east coast where active groups operate, to participate in these rallies. Bill is considering venues for the September rally, probably on the I-o-W. If any members have other suggestions please contact him with your ideas.

We finished the evening on board *Squaw* with a nightcap before dispersing safely to our own boats.

Sunday dawned in full sun with the harbour looking picturesque; Yarmouth is of course situated at the mouth of a short river estuary. Above the swing-bridge is a serpentine river, this passes southward through reed beds and pasture for about two miles and may be explored by dinghy taking the flood tide within a cable or two of Freshwater bay. Refreshments can be had at a range of facilities before returning on the ebb to Yarmouth. It is worth taking one’s tender to the island for this trip.

As good things must end, so did our weekend. We left during Sunday afternoon after the first of the flood with a favourable wind and tide. The forecast showers eventually caught up with us by 1800hrs. and a close encounter with the retiring Cunarder ‘QE 2’ outward bound and lined with hundreds of waving passengers on her sun decks ended our trip memorably .

Roland Liddell, *Squaw*



Three Tomahawks and Betina on Harold Hayles pontoon, Yarmouth, IoW.

Round the Island Race 2008

A grey dawn and the calm voice of the 0520 weather forecaster on *Nokomis’* radio: “....Wight, Portland Plymouth, South West or West, 5 to 7, showers, poor at first becoming good....” Not a brilliant forecast for a race round the Island but with a keen crew and a significant expenditure on the race entry fee, we decided to creep out of Gosport and investigate.

The Island Sailing Club’s Round The Island Race – RTIR – is billed as the world’s most popular yacht race, and with over 1800 contestants, this is almost certainly true. The race is

notable in that all comers can enter – the entries range from the big names (like Dame Ellen) down to contestants (like me) who just wanted to experience the occasion. The race starts off Cowes and heads towards the Needles, turns towards St Catherine's Point and then back to Bembridge Ledge, finally re-entering the Solent for the run back to Cowes and the finishing line. With so many competitors, the start times are staggered from 0600 (for the fastest boats) to 0740 for Class 8 (we were in Class 8 – over 150 boats).

We had a quick chat with Tony Hepworth and the crew of *Bumble B* before motor sailing towards Cowes, munching breakfast and hoisting the main – with two reefs. We were unprepared for the sight that greeted us as we rounded Gilkicker Point – literally, a wall to wall array of sail, stretching from Cowes to Calshot. As we drew nearer, shafts of sunlight broke through the clouds, illuminating the fleet and the turbulent water. The voice of the race starter could now be heard on the VHF, counting down the seconds to the next start – the different classes started at 10 minute intervals.



Nearing the start, the engine was switched off and the most of the genoa unrolled – 15 minutes to go as we entered the waiting area, off Brambles. Our timing was checked against the starter as we maneuvered to the Northern end of the line giving us (and 50 others!) the classic starboard tack approach. All too soon the seconds counted down and we were off, soon tacking onto port to find a cleaner wind. We (and all the others) settled down to a hard beat towards Hurst, the tide pushing our speed to over 6 knots. On this stretch, VHF Ch16 seemed to be in almost continuous use – dismasted off the Beaulieu River, a collision in the Hurst narrows and a Mayday with two overboard at the Needles.... We looked at each other, called up Bumble (who was ahead) and agreed to have a 'look' at the Needles channel. (Not to provide assistance of course – the RNLI were already on hand!)

By now the clouds had gone and the fleet, rounding the Needles, looked spectacular. As expected the sea here was rough but Nokomis seemed to cope with it all, apart from the glass of the oil lamp, later found shattered on the cabin sole! We rounded and with full genoa set off towards St Catherine's, wallowing heavily in the swell. Our speed pushed up to 9 knots as the waves hissed past – barely any of the fleet were deploying spinnakers! Channel 16 again – a skiff is overturned at St Catherine's! We seem to be holding our position reasonably well so, time for lunch and drinks.

By the time we arrived off St Catherine's the flood tide was under us and conditions were much quieter than they were for the race leaders (who, according to the ISC VHF channel, were now arriving 'home'). No sign of the overturned skiff, but an RNLI boat was seen well to starboard. We continued on an easterly course before shaking out one of the reefs and putting in a gybe towards Bembridge Ledge buoy – one of the only two race 'marks' in the race, the other being No Mans Land Fort.

At the Bembridge buoy the sails were hardened onto a beam reach and we were well heeled as we raced towards the Fort, the fleet now well scattered, both in front and behind! Passing the Fort we re-entered the Solent and were then close hauled with Cowes almost on the nose. An intense discussion of tactics then ensued – to tack to starboard and close the island shore, in the hope of avoiding the East going tide? We gave up trying to do the math and decided to continue as we were. Nearing Cowes we had to put in some short tacks so as to cross the correct finishing line for our class, frantically staring at the committee boat to read

the time – 1738, almost 10hrs from the start! We 'texted' our finishing time to the ISC organizing committee and set off for Gosport and a well earned drink with Bumble's crew – who had finished half an hour earlier!

After all that, how did we do? Well, we were 32nd (out of 62) in our division, 99th (out of 144) in our class and 400th (out of 733) in the ISC rating system. We were 3rd Tomahawk across the line (out of 6 that had entered). But it was a super day out - and Dame Ellen retired!

Gordon Keyte, *Nokomis*

The Non-Tomahawk St Vaast Rally 2008

The forecast for the weekend of the 19th/ 20th July was not encouraging and when Bill Garrod and I met late on the Friday afternoon at Wicor near Fareham, (where Bill now keeps Bonita) we were already aware that everyone else who had intended coming had abandoned the idea. We were soon joined by another Bill, (Gloria's brother) and his brother in law Bob.

We boarded the boatyard launch, transferred and stowed our gear aboard and motored down Portsmouth Harbour consuming a chilli that Gloria had prepared earlier.

The foresail and mizzen were hoisted and we passed Bembridge Ledge about 2100 followed by a close encounter with an outward bound Brittany Ferry which suddenly altered course when very near our port quarter, to pass to starboard between us and the Isle of Wight. This excitement over, we settled into watches, Bill and I taking the first three hours below. The seas were very rough and it was impossible to find a comfortable place to get one's head down. I ended up on the cabin sole on top of some bags! For the first time in 21 years I succumbed and created a few channel pizzas and Bill G joined in as well.

Our first session on watch was very wet and exhausting and when we went below again, I had a quick change into some dry gear and slept like a top in the focsle despite the motion which at times lifted me off the bunk!

It was difficult to maintain the desired course as we were going hard to windward, constantly being lee bowed. When we closed the French coast we had an east going tide and had been pushed well into the Seine bay. Most of the morning we spent thrashing to windward through a very rough sea under engine and almost directly into the wind in blustery but sunny conditions only arriving at the gate in St Vaast about 15 minutes before it was due to close.

Having found a suitable mooring at the end of one of the pontoons, everything was secured and made ship shape. We then had a very welcome shower and some food before an afternoon relaxing.

We decided to have dinner at the Fuscia. Although opting for the cheapest fixed price menu, we were given all the little extras that make it so special; the appetizers, of caviar and avocado and caviar and something else on small pieces of toast with the aperitifs and a palate cleanser of ice cold tomato consommé. All the staff were cheerful and attentive, the waiter joking about the awkward plates and how disappointed he had been when the chef dropped a couple and they didn't break! For anyone who has not visited this fine establishment their web site is <http://www.france-fuchsias.com/> and gives a taste of the atmosphere and style of the place.

Sitting chatting and drinking coffee we suddenly realised we were the only ones left in the restaurant and the time was 23.30, so we hastily paid the bill and walked back to the boat around the top of the harbour. From the beach close by there were little paper hot air balloons being launched powered by small candles. They drifted over the harbour in the breeze. In the top corner of the harbour there was a huge replica Viking longboat, authentic in every detail although daylight later revealed it had an inboard engine and satellite communications. The numerous crew were under a large canvas awning rigged across the vessel.

Sunday morning dawned sunny and still breezy. We breakfasted in the cockpit on coffee and fresh pastries and watched the various vessels milling around waiting for the gate to open, including the longboat, which I have since been told is to visit GunWharf Quay Portsmouth very soon.



Viking Longboat, St Vaast

We took a walk to the top of the harbour to visit the open air spit roast that trades every Sunday. There is a semi permanent structure there a bit like a bus shelter with a fire basket and row of slots at each end which hold the spits on which they turn the meat over a fire of oak off cuts. They bring the wood with them and a variety of lamb pork and chicken. Many of the locals use the service. You chose your meat, they tag it and record the time you want to collect it. Having had meat from there on a number of occasions I can thoroughly recommend it. We ordered some belly pork and went to explore the town stopping for a beer or two before calling in to Gosselans, (spelling ?) known as the Harrods of St Vaast. It is a traditional grocery (although self service), with a large and varied wine cellar. We collected fresh salad and some wine for our meal later.

The rest of the day we spent watching the world go by and relaxing in the cockpit, save for a short journey to the spit roast to collect the meat which we later enjoyed with a salad and the wine.

There was a stiff cold breeze blowing from almost due north and when we departed at 2300 we had to motor as far as Barfleur. Once we had passed the light the wind shifted more north west, but we still had to keep close to windward. There was still a fair sea running but not as much wind as on the outward journey. There was a bit of east going traffic but little or nothing west bound. As usual we sighted the top of St Catherine's Down soon after first light and spent hours watching it grow bigger and the familiar shore of the island gradually revealing itself. We eventually entered Portsmouth Harbour early afternoon and made our way up to Wicor and put the boat to bed. All our gear and the crew were ferried ashore and Gloria was waiting on the jetty when we arrived.

All of us enjoyed the weekend despite the rough conditions, but were all agreed that if we had set out in a Tomahawk, we would have turned back. Let's hope the conditions are more favourable next year!

Peter Llewellyn, *Incamoon*

EAST COAST TOMAHAWK RALLY: July 25 – 27 2008

The 2008 East Coast Tomahawk Rally was well supported, and *Ceilidh*, *Hawkeye*, *Malibu*, *Mojave* and *Varuna II* managed to berth together on the same pontoon in Bradwell Marina on the Friday evening. We were also joined ashore by Doug Baynton and Caroline, who had driven over from Wickford. A knee operation has prevented Doug from launching *Vandini* this year, but it was good to have his and Caroline's company for the evening, and he has promised to be afloat again in '09.

We enjoyed meeting new TOA members Geoff and Senta Newson, who were pleased to show us over *Hawkeye*, a fin-keeled Tomahawk which they have owned for just over a year. She is kept on a swinging mooring in Harwich harbour, where they are members of the Harwich and Dovercourt Sailing Club. *Hawkeye's* previous owner had gone to town on the electrics – she boasts no fewer than four batteries and a permanently wired-in solar panel to keep them charged. One drives a 'fridge, and much interest was shown by several TOA members who like a chunk of ice in their evening G&T. (Geoff was very generous with some fine French Caribbean rum when we all descended on *Hawkeye* at the end of the evening!) *Hawkeye* also has a new 13.5hp Beta engine (like *Malibu*), which is very quiet-running and economical.

A pleasant evening was spent in "The Green Man", with much yarning, and the fleet sailed at 0900 the following morning (or rather motored, for the anemometers remained resolutely stationery). With an eye on wind and tide, *Hawkeye* stayed in the Blackwater, visiting West Mersea before taking a favourable tide back up the Wallet to Harwich. The other four Tomahawks motored through the Swin Spitway and into the mouth of the River Crouch where sails were hoisted and an engine-assisted beat up the Whittaker channel with the wind now F1 – 2 sou'westerly took us towards Burnham. Once past the Inner Crouch buoy the river turns due west, and we could switch off the iron tops'l and enjoy the peace and quiet of a sail towards the mouth of the River Roach, a couple of miles below Burnham.

The fleet anchored off Pagglesham at the end of the afternoon, where we were pleased to see Doug and Caroline again, who had driven over to spend the evening with us in the "Plough and Sail". As you can see from the photograph, dinner was enjoyed *alfresco*, and the pub lived up to its reputation for good food and beer.

The East Coast Pilot mentions that the boatyard at Pagglesham does not encourage landing at its pontoon, which usefully stretches almost to the low water line. It recommends visiting yachtsmen use the public slip on the down river side of the boatyard. However, a liveaboard houseboat appeared to be permanently stranded across the top of the slip, rendering access impossible. Other houseboats and liveaboard cruisers were tied up along the length of the pontoon and a general air of seediness pervaded the scene. A somewhat unkempt inhabitant of one of the houseboats informed us that landing was £5 per boat, and anchoring in the river £10 per boat per night (!). We questioned the right of a private boatyard to charge for anchoring, and a couple of TOA members paid their £5, but no receipts were issued. The boatyard has recently been acquired by Essex Boatyards Ltd, and we will be making representation to them, suggesting they tidy up the yard, post a tariff of landing / mooring charges, and issue their employee with a receipt book.

The Roach is still very much a commercial river, with coasters navigating up to the mill at Rochford. Fishing vessels use it as a short cut through to the Havengore lifting bridge at Foulness Island and on to the Thames. However, we enjoyed a peaceful night and weighed anchor at 0900 on the Sunday morning. The wind was again conspicuous by its absence, and we unavoidably increased our carbon footprint by motoring out of the Roach and motor-sailing all the way down to the Spitway where we did find some light and variable wind which eventually turned into a south-easterly sea breeze to blow us gently back up the Blackwater.



*Geoff & Senta , enjoying the morning sun on Hawkeye
("This is the picture we send our friends to explain why we are not available for any other activity during the summer months !")*



The Plough and Sail, Pagglesham, 26 July 2008, Don & Penny (Malibu), Roger & Mick (Varuna), Sam & Gordon (Ceilidh), Mick & Harry (Mojave), Doug and Caroline (Vandini)

It was quite different from the previous year's rally, when strong westerlies caused us to abandon our plan to sail round into the Crouch. For next year we hope to venture up the Wallet and into the Walton Backwaters, which are *Hawkeye's* cruising ground.

Don Baines, *Malibu*

Tomahawk mods 1: Mast step solutions

A few years ago we (Bumble B) had some difficulty in tensioning the rigging. The rig was tensioned but after a good sail we noted that the rig had lost its tension and we were running out of bottle screw thread to re-tension. Close inspection of the mast step region revealed a slight deformity in the coach roof. The coach roof in this region is of sandwich construction with a wooden spacer. Water ingress had resulted in the wood rotting and caused the coach

roof to compress under load. Gordon Keyte had a similar situation on *Nokomis* and cured his problem by placing a hardwood saddle between the mast foot and coach roof to spread the load. The saddle can be seen in Gordon's article on Cockpit main sail reefing below. We took a different approach, on the advice of a surveyor, by fabricating spacers between the sandwich and then placing a base plate between the mast foot and coach roof, see figs 1&2 below. In addition we carried the load through to stainless steel brackets which were attached to the 'heads' bulkhead and on the inside cabin roof beneath the mast step region. The brackets inside the cabin can be seen in figs 3, 4 &5.

	
<p>Fig 1 – Plate between foot of mast and coach roof</p>	<p>Fig 2 – Plate between foot of mast and coach roof</p>
	
<p>Fig 3 – Stainless steel bracket attached to Heads bulkhead</p>	<p>Fig 4– Stainless steel bracket attached to cabin roof and under the mast step</p>
	
<p>Fig 5 – Stainless steel bracket attached to cabin roof and under the mast step</p>	

Tony Hepworth, *Bumble B*

Tomahawk mods 2: Cockpit main sail reefing

One of the virtues of a Tomahawk is that it's a superb boat for single handed sailing. However, with advancing years I thought I should try and stay in the cockpit most of the time and decided to fit cockpit main sail reefing. I visited Peter Llewellyn's boat (*Incarnoon*) and noted how the halyards were led round turning blocks at the foot of the mast. For *Nokomis*, I

had a thin stainless steel plate made up which fitted underneath the mast step but had an aft protruding section with holes to take the turning block clevis pins. The arrangement I used had main halyard, topping lift and kicker on starboard and on port, tack and outhaul for 1st and 2nd reefs (four lines in all) these can be seen in Fig 1 – which also shows the hardwood saddle mentioned in Mod 1. Fig 2 shows a close up of the turning blocks and the holes in the stainless steel plate can also be seen (note, the starboard block has three sheaves in case I found a downhaul was needed). The main sail control gear works very well and I can reef quickly and safely; although I found that the mast head sheaves needed replacing to allow free running of the main halyard.

Incidentally, Fig 1 also shows the Remote Access Microphone; I find this is a tremendous boon when sailing single handed as it allows me to control the VHF radio from the cockpit as well acting as a microphone and speaker. It means that I can listen on Ch16 and switch to 23 or 86 for the Coastguard navigation/weather warnings without leaving the cockpit.

Gordon Keyte, *Nokomis*



Fig 1 Cockpit reefing



Fig 2 Turning blocks

Future TOA Events:

- **Solent area rally**

To be held on the weekend September 13th/14th, venue to be decided but will be in the Solent 'area'. If you are interested, Tony Hepworth will send out the details by email – let Tony know you're interested and your email address. Tony's email is a.hepworth@ntlworld.com

- **AGM January 2009**

This is just an advance notice that next year we hope to hold the AGM at the London Boat Show (Excel Centre) on January 11th (see AGM report in the March bulletin). We also hope to obtain a concession for Boat show tickets. Details of the AGM start time and the room location will be published in the next Bulletin in November.

Subscription reminder

A number of members have still not renewed their membership for this year. If your Bulletin has a red spot on this page (page 9) it means that I have no record of your sub and would be delighted to receive it – the subscription is £12.00. My address is: Gordon Keyte, Cherry Bank, Dippenhall Street, Crondall, Hants, GU10 5NZ. If you have a red spot and have paid please contact me (jengo@talk21.com).

Selling your boat?

There comes a time when we're either too old to continue sailing or you've just inherited a windfall from the Lottery and our beloved Tomahawk has to be sold. The Association is keen that new (Tomahawk) owners join the association and to assist in that process, a brochure and membership application form are attached. Having said that – we are of course equally keen that 'old' members continue with TOA membership – whether they own a Tomahawk or not!



Tomahawk Owners Association TOA

Our aim is to share information between members,
to hold rallies and to increase the benefits of owning a Tomahawk.

History

The Marcon Tomahawk started production in 1970 and was first shown at the 1971 London Boat Show in 1970. There were around 290 boats built in the following 10 years.

The original Tomahawk 25 was built by **Marcon Marine** as a small fast cruising yacht with five berths in a semi open plan layout. Also by Marcon Marine at this time were the Sabre 27, Rival 32, Halberdier 36 the Marcon 24 and the Marcon 34.

The Tomahawk Owners Association was launched in 1999.

What we offer

A Secure website section providing the opportunity to contact other members, a quarterly Bulletin with members articles, projects and useful advice, members forum, brokerage, boat bits for sale/wanted and rallies. The Tomahawk specification, club events, brokerage and for sale items can be found at the above links but you will need to be a member to add information and view any other pages.

Activities

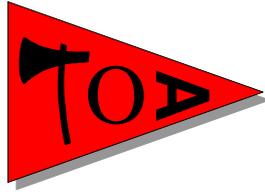
South coast rallies include St Vaast and the Solent,
Round the Isle of Wight race for Commodores Cup
East coast rallies include the River Blackwater and associated areas
details of rallies can be found on the club events page

Membership

Please complete the application form attached and send to

Hon Sec: Tony Hepworth
75 Horn Rd
Farnborough
Hants
GU14 8RL
Tel: 01252 655849

Email: a.hepworth@ntlworld.com
Web: www.tomahawk25.co.uk



TOMAHAWK OWNERS ASSOCIATION
www.tomahawk25.co.uk

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION.

SURNAME.....Forenames.....

ADDRESS.....

.....Post code.....

TELEPHONE Number..... Mobile.....

FAX Number..... Email.....

Yacht Name..... Year of manufacture.....

Sail Number..... SSR Number.....

Make & H.P. of Engine..... Keel Fin or Twin.....

Special Equipment (Instruments etc.).....

Sailing Club..... Sailing Area.....

Interesting cruises made in your Tomahawk to other areas.....

.....

Would you be willing to help in the running of the Association?.....

.....

**Please return to the Hon. Secretary:- Tony Hepworth, 75 Horn Rd,
Farnborough, Hampshire. GU14 8RL Tel: 01252 655849
Email a.hepworth@ntlworld.com**

Please do feel free to add any further comments or suggestions, below or over the page. Membership £12.00 please, Cheques made payable to Tomahawk Owners Association.