From the Editor

Welcome to the latest ICOYC Newsletter which focuses on the 7th ICOYC Commodores’ Forum which took place at the Royal Southern Yacht Club in September. We have details of all the different aspects of the Forum including the main discussion sessions, the guest speakers, the hotly contested Commodores’ Cup and the two cruises on the south coast which preceded the Forum. Mark Inkster, the Commodore of the RSaMYC, has written an interesting piece on his club’s experience of hosting the Forum, whilst I have compiled an overview of the delegates’ most memorable aspects of the event. This edition also includes details of the sesquicentenary being held at the RYS.

Most importantly, this edition introduces John McNeill as the new ICOYC President and in his opening piece to the Newsletter he outlines his vision for the Council. After serving as Vice President he has taken over from John Stork and will now lead the ICOYC for the next two years. I am sure that you will join me in welcoming him in his new role whilst at the same time thanking John Stork for all the hard work and effort he expended on behalf of the ICOYC whilst President.

Best wishes, Alison Boyd
Newsletter Editor
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On Course for 2013–14

With all the world’s woes of late, it is a rare privilege to have the opportunity to lead an organization as healthy and well supported as the ICOYC. I am honoured, and will do my best to see that the course so well set by my predecessors and the membership is continued. That ‘course’, I believe, has a few well defined marks to be rounded in the next two years, and, with your help, I hope that we can pass each one successfully, fulfilling the goals so ably set in the birth of the Council by its founders.

During one of the grandest events of the recent Forum, our banquet aboard Her Majesty’s Ship Warrior, I was able to briefly outline some of the items that I view as most important to the continued success of the Council. In the few paragraphs below, you will find the same points explored a bit more in hopes that this plan may be seen by all, and refreshed in the memory of those at dinner that night.

The Council was formed in late 2006 after the concept was presented to a Forum in Hong Kong. Following the unanimous approval of this presentation by the attending clubs, the Council’s objectives were stated as:

- The development and encouragement of fellowship among yacht clubs;
- The discussion of topics of mutual interest to yacht clubs;
- The delivery of increased benefits to members of ICOYC yacht clubs.

These objectives remain today, although defined in more complex detail, and still serve us well as we pursue the Council Credo, ‘The LEADING Yacht Clubs, Working Together, Sharing Experience’.

In the coming time, I would suggest a few specific activities and actions to continue fulfilment of our Mission defined above.

Fellowship
In terms of ‘fellowship among yacht clubs’, by building our committee participation we should reach beyond the Council’s core of delegates to involve the members of our clubs in the Council affairs, and expand the existing cruising efforts to an Interclub Activities Committee to encourage and guide a broader range of interclub as well as Council-wide opportunities.

Discussion
‘Discussion of topics of mutual interest’ will continue to be paramount in producing a continually improving schedule of Forums and Conferences of value to us all, and striving to establish active interclub communications on issues both general to the sport and Council as well as individual, through a private online means of sharing information and experiences.

Increased benefits
‘Increased benefits to club members’, beyond fellowship, are delivered in some subtle forms, such as the things we learn from our interchanges that help our clubs to improve. That, of course will continue, but we will need to do a much better job of communicating those benefits as Council benefits to the very members they affect. Additionally, we will use our best assets, with your help, to assist club member volunteers in their tasks with committees and such, by proactively sharing information and experience from Council archives.

Implicit in the ‘Mission’ is Council membership development. We must continue to seek out ‘leading’ yacht clubs in yachting venues not presently represented, so that our voice as an organization can be seen to truly represent that of all leading clubs where appropriate, while maintaining the criteria that have preserved the conviviality and ‘family’ atmosphere we value. Further, the Affiliate membership provided in our founding documents should now be defined and activated to assure our role in the broader leadership of the sport, and relationships with non-club organizations that also support our basic mission, and the sport.

I hope that you will join me in this pursuit over the next few years, and will take up some area of effort and involvement that may interest you. There is ample room in this for everyone who would accept some small responsibility. If you have a particular interest, or would like to discuss any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact me or any member of the Board. Constructive criticism, good ideas, and thoughtful questions are MOST welcome!

Fair Winds

John McNeill
ICOYC President
Forum: Membership Development

The first session of the 7th ICOYC Commo-
dores’ Forum at the Royal Southern Yacht Club focused on Membership Development – ‘It’s all about Participation’. Sandringham YC Commodore Chris Carlile gave an overview of the Club’s successful attempts to address every age level of members with its own program. Youngsters are trained in dinghies and are approached through their favourite media while advancing through the stages from learning to sail up to racing. Seniors are also welcomed to learn or improve their sailing, but rather on keelboats and guided through the club’s offerings by traditional mail. Adapting both program and communication methods to each generation’s needs and habits proves to be a most successful scheme.

One of the rather difficult groups to win over and retain is members who leave the confines of their parents’ home and explore the world. Keeping them interested in their club calls for attention to their special needs. Royal Van-
couver YC’s Past Commodore Jim Burns presented the club’s successful ‘Active Inter-
mediate’ program to the audience.

Commodore Gunilla Antas of Nyländska Jak-
tkubben in Helsinki and Edith Frilet of Socié-
té Nautique de Marseille each gave a presenta-
tion on ‘Developing Membership by Social and Yachting Participation’. While our Finnish Member Club explained the re-structuring of the club’s member program, the SNM subject was a vivid volunteer program and various contests between volunteer groups to strengthen their feeling of belonging to the club and the fun factor in volunteer work. Lively discussions developed in the audience as membership is so important to each yacht club. The good as much as the less successful examples were welcomed to enable delegates to learn from each other.

Past Rear Commodore Sailing Jack Edwards (Royal Thames YC) and Rear Commodore George Jepsen (St Francis YC) covered the topic of ‘It Really IS Easy Being Green’ with presentations on the Royal Thames Mansura Trophy awarded for excellence in developments in hybrid marine engines, and on the environmental program St Francis YC introduced into their racing.

The session sparked a lot of interest and further exchanges between delegates, some of which still continue via email.

Commodore Guy Walters
Royal Vancouver Yacht Club

Forum: Managing Sailing Activities

The fourth session of the Forum was entitled ‘Managing Sailing Activities’ and consisted of two parts; ‘Effective Regatta Management’ and ‘Optimal Club Fleet Optimization’. The session was chaired by Guy Walters, Commo-
dore of Royal Vancouver Yacht Club.

‘Effective Regatta Management’ represented a collation of the responses from nineteen member clubs answering a questionnaire that was distributed in March. The presentation was in the form of presenting, and commenting on, the collated responses with occasional interjections by participants on points of particular interest. The questions inquired about the: importance of race management (RM) to the club; funding racing programs; offerings to competitors; boats and equipment available for RM; manning of race committees and recruiting, training and compensating people; types and numbers of races started annually; and handicapping systems in use.

Six clubs reported that racing and RM are ‘top priority’. Another ten claimed ‘high priority’ and three opted for ‘important but not all important’. Funding for racing comes from a combination of sponsorship, entry fees and general revenue. Clubs typically provide adequate physical assets (committee boats, marks, etc.) and amenities to ensure happy competitors.

Most clubs have staff participation in race entry and/or committee boat operation. Beyond that, all effort is by volunteers. There is a great variance in the manner by which people are recruited and trained for RM work.

All clubs focused most on fleet racing. Southern hemisphere clubs seem to have more race starts per year than northern clubs. Typically there are about 30 to 40 race days per year. Twelve clubs report hosting one or more days of match racing per year and five report occasional team races. Little was reported on ocean racing. The number of regional, national or world championships hosted seemed quite low relative to the number that must happen annually.

The last question, about rating systems in use, was very interesting in that among the 18 responses received, 17 different systems were identified. However, PHRF, ORC and IRC were commonly cited.

‘Optimal Club Fleet Optimization’ grew from another survey about club owned boats. The results were brought forward as three short presentations by: Anders Kristensen, CEO, Royal Danish Yacht Club (KDY); Inge Stromfjord-Jepsen, Past Commodore, Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club (RHKYC); and Chris Carlile, Commodore, Sandringham Yacht Club (SYC).

Anders spoke of the situation whereby his club owns 27 boats in five different classes. He acknowledged that KDY has too many boats of too many classes. So many boats cannot be accommodated in the club marina so several are in commercial marinas, paying commercial moorage rates. The upside of club owned boats includes easier access for juniors, students and adult ‘Learn to Sail’ applicants. The downside is largely that ‘what is everybody’s is nobody’s’. Staff time is required to maintain the fleet.

Inge spoke mainly about the program that brought the fleet of J/80s in Hong Kong from zero a couple of years ago to six joint club/membership owned boats, with another 20 racing in the harbour. RHKYC was fortunate in that there is a licensed builder of J/80s in nearby China and the club was able to negotiate a good price for the purchase of six boats. Others piggy backed on this order and as a result there are now 25 or more J/80s in Hong Kong.

Chris spoke about the fleet of Beneteau 7.5s owned by the club and the many ways these boats are utilized. The Beneteaus are corporately sponsored and fully ‘logo-ed up’. The boats are primarily used by Intermediate members and are used for Discover Sailing, Learn to Sail, match racing, corporate and club racing events. Utilization is heavy and maintenance is continuous.

One initiative of SYC is brilliant, although it has nothing to do with keel boats. The club has ten Optimists with graphics adopted from big boats in the fleet. The Optimists were purchased for the club by the big-boat owners, who now have mini clones on the water.

In summary, Session 4 could more accurately have been called ‘Managing Sailboat Racing Activities’. To be able to conduct sailboat races a club needs a suitable venue, adequate equipment and personnel, and the financial will and ability to do so. Additionally, there are strong reasons for clubs to have boats available for various training and racing programs. We had good presentations and good discussion on these issues. Maybe things can be explored a little further in Hong Kong.
Forum: Effective Communications

As the Chair of the Effective Communications Session, I was actually not happy with my own performance when I discovered that the most effective communication between people did not happen in my session but in all the informal gatherings at the Forum.

When I first took on the mission, I tasked myself with a clear objective. The session was on Effective Communications and hence it had to be extremely interactive. With that in mind, I structured the session so that there was good balance between speakers’ presentations, Q&As and breakout sessions where delegates could exchange thoughts interactively. I underestimated the time constraint when the entire session started 45 minutes behind schedule.

The survey results on how clubs communicate can be quite trivial to some people. But there are some interesting findings where I am sure clubs can learn from each other. My charts of facts and figures are on the ICOYC Forum website. Please take a look.

The greatest satisfaction I have is on the quality of our speakers, particularly Dave Fuller our guest speakers on the subject of ‘Use and Abuse of Social Media’.

On the internal communications side, we had Anders Kristensen from the Royal Danish Yacht Club, Richard Hewett from Sandringham Yacht Club and Bob Miller from Seattle Yacht Club, talking about the practices and mechanics of communicating with members. I deliberately organized it into a three regions’ format so that our audience could pick up differences, if there were any.

The angle was changed to sharing of live examples when we reached the portion of communicating with the public. Peta Stuart-Hunt from Royal Southern Yacht Club, Bob Griswold from San Francisco Yacht Club and Koko Mueller from Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club all passed on excellent messages on what external communications is all about, particularly after a club’s major incident, under different scenarios.

There is loads of practical content from the session and this is reflected in the presentation slides which are on the ICOYC Forum website. I do hope you can browse through them. I am sure they will make your journey to the Forum even more worthwhile.

The time was 17:30 when we commenced the breakout sessions. Although 30 minutes behind schedule, I still believe this was an important part where genuine communications could take place. It did. The subjects of measuring the values of communications, and of ‘high-tech versus high-touch’, all generated more debates in the teams than I expected.

And, at the end of the day, I was glad that I could dispatch my prizes to the winning team rather than carrying them all back home.

So, in summary, I don’t think communications is something new. But it is something that we often overlook. It is certainly a vital element in members’ and private clubs. Public voices can easily overshadow the substance of a Club. Members’ voices can easily overwhelm credibility of a Board. Hence all require the DNA of efficient and effective communications.

Ambrose Lo
Immediate Past Commodore
Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club

Forum: Strategic Planning

On the second morning of the Forum, Phil Smith of the Eastern Yacht Club chaired a seminar on the practical aspects of Strategic Planning. Other participants were Commodore Charles Lowry of the Seattle Yacht Club, Past Commodore William T. Torgerson of the Annapolis Yacht Club, Commodore Hans Joachim Isler of the Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club, Past Commodore Inge Strompft-Jepsen of the Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club and Anders Kristensen, CEO of the Royal Danish Yacht Club.

The seminar was intended as a follow up to the seminar on Strategic Planning that was presented at the 6th Commodores’ Forum in Seattle. It began with a recap of the significant points about strategic planning that were agreed last year. A successful plan needs a group of members or leaders who believe that strategic planning is important. Any plan must be based on a critical assessment of the facts, not on speculation or individual bias. A plan must be realistic and given both financial and practical constraints. The plan can’t be developed and then forgotten – ‘it won’t self-execute from a drawer’. There must be a plan to implement the plan, it must be funded, and future leaders and the membership must support the plan.

After the recap, each of the seminar participants spoke about how their clubs actually plan. Not surprisingly there was a reasonably large variation in approach. Some clubs have an ongoing plan which is reviewed, updated and implemented on a regular basis. Others have developed plans in the past but found them hard to implement. A common problem is the tendency of clubs to focus on funding and executing one project at a time without a clear road map to the next project.

Various catalysts were cited as the motivation for the planning process ranging from a fire or other disaster to expired leases, neighbour-ood change, changes in leadership or general economic issues. Most plans deal with replacement or upgrade of assets rather than abstract concepts although it would appear that all clubs are focusing on ways to engage younger members in the sport of sailing. Methods of funding differ from club to club. Most have a process for building capital reserves to be used when needed whereas others rely on ad hoc assessments.

There was a wide-ranging discussion about mission statements. Some clubs examine their basic mission on a regular basis whereas other clubs leave the basic mission alone and focus on how to implement the mission. It was pointed out that specific goals are more easily implemented and evaluated than general statements of purpose.

The panel and the audience shared thoughts about leadership planning. In most cases it would appear that a nominating or similar committee takes responsibility for identifying future leaders. In general an individual will be nominated to be a flag officer only after having served in a variety of positions at the club over a period of years. Other positions such as secretary or treasurer are filled based on skills and can serve as a means of identifying candidates for higher office.

Commodore Phil Smith
Eastern Yacht Club
Forum: Club Operating Management

The last formal session of the Forum presented the opportunity for Club Managers to provide input from an operational perspective. Building on issues identified in the Commodores’ Concerns survey the panel, comprised:

- Mark Bovaird (General Manager, Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club);
- Carmen Derricott (General Manager, Royal Vancouver Yacht Club);
- Richard Hewett (CEO, Sandringham Yacht Club);
- Chris Pullinger (Secretary/GM, Royal Southern Yacht Club);
- Stuart Walton (General Manager, Royal Perth Yacht Club).

They split the commentary into four key sections.

In versus out – the contract catering debate
Looking at past and current experiences across the diverse range of clubs represented the panel identified good practice and potential pitfalls in both models.

Member versus non-member trade
Looking at how the asset of the clubhouse can be utilized whilst retaining the privacy of the members. Policy varied immensely between clubs from a complete closed door policy to the provision of a restaurant open to non-member trade.

More members using more facilities more often
Experiences of activities targeted at specific segments of the membership to provide a more bespoke social calendar are proving successful across clubs, with the need to ensure traditional events such as summer balls keep their edge and appeal to the membership if they are to continue to be enjoyed by them.

Changing demographics
What sacrifices are you prepared to make? The final part of the session looked at potential ways of attracting younger members and the balance needed to retain traditional standards. Dress code, particularly footwear and shorts, formality and provision of dedicated facilities were all examined.

The content of each segment inspired a lively question and answer session and illustrated the importance of assessing a club’s location, surroundings, facilities and membership profile when planning a strategy. Across all of the areas it was clear that there is no ‘one size fits all’ answer to the questions common to most clubs.

As important as the above was the message that a clear set of operating rules and boundaries for each of the topics is crucial in order for the club to maintain effective and consistent operations. This is a challenge indeed when having to consider the needs of the membership and balance those with a clear strategy, sometimes changing perceptions and perhaps longstanding traditions to keep pace with modern ideas.

Mike Rogers
ICOYC Administrator

ISAF at the ICOYC Forum

The International Sailing Federation, which interacts with the national authorities in each country, is the key international authority for sailing. Which is why we were particularly pleased when the Secretary-General, Jerome Pels, agreed to join us at the ICOYC Commodores’ Forum in Hamble.

Jerome Pels started by saying that it was exciting for him to be talking directly with the leading yacht clubs, as ISAF’s communications are normally only with the national authorities. Later, when thanking him for his contribution, President John McNell commented that it would be excellent to keep the dialogue going in future, and he hoped that ISAF could take part in future Forums.

The address reviewed all ISAF’s recent achievements, including the most successful Olympic and Paralympic Games at Weymouth in the UK. Jerome Pels said that one reason the Games had been successful was because they focused on the needs of the athletes, and the sailors were all very happy with the arrangements. The race management had been very good and the spectators had greatly enjoyed the events, particularly the final medal races. There were also lessons to be learned – he mentioned some – and ISAF will take these into account in future sailing events, and at Rio.

There was discussion about the classes selected for the Rio Olympics and it was pointed out that some of the decisions, such as kiteboarding, could still be changed if the national authorities did not accept the ISAF Council’s recommendations. It was noted, however, that these recommendations reflect negotiation with the IOC as to their stated needs for the Games, including expense control and national inclusion. The November meeting of ISAF will be particularly interesting as there will also be a new President appointed.

Jerome Pels added useful information to the ICOYC’s earlier discussions on social media, summarizing how the Federation’s websites were accessed and the growing significance of Facebook, iPads/iPhones and mobile websites in yachting. The inexpensive iPad/iPhone app of the new Racing Rules had already sold more copies in one month than the former printed version in the last four years.

The delegates had many questions to ask and points to make at the end of the talk. The questions included the issues of sailors’ amateur or professional status and it was accepted that the present system was not perfect, suggestions for improving it were welcomed. We were told that one individual seeking re-categorization had said ‘If I’m not an amateur, I’ll lose my sailing job’. The discussion about the decision on the Olympic classes continued, some of the delegates being very unhappy about the lack of keelboats in the future. Jerome Pels explained how these decisions are made by all the countries involved, and as a result are based on the popularity and availability of each type of boat, and the costs involved.

It was a most refreshing session and there was a general view among those present that these dialogues should continue in future.

John Stork
Immediate Past President ICOYC
Best Ever Forum?

The general feeling at the end of the 7th ICOYC Commodores’ Forum held at the Royal Southern Yacht Club was that it was a resounding success. To qualify this feeling John McNeill asked me to approach those who attended the Forum to seek out their views on the event. Now having canvassed the opinion of many of those who attended the Forum I want to share their responses with you. What is clear from these responses is that the 7th ICOYC Commodores’ Forum provided an unrivalled opportunity to discuss the issues that really matter in a friendly and engaging environment. Meeting up with each other leading sailing clubs helped those attending put their own clubs into perspective and realize that everyone was facing the same issues and had common interests. That the ICOYC is taking the lead in the sport of sailing can be seen in a blog posted on Yacht Racing Biz (http://www.yachtracing.biz/blog/2012/10/icoyc-commodores-forum/).

Host Club

The host club was universally praised as their hospitality and friendliness set the tone for the whole event. One delegate said that ‘nothing was too much of a problem for the RSnYC’, whilst another said that the Royal Southern had ‘greeted them with open arms. Other adjectives used to describe the Royal Southern were ‘excellent’, ‘fun’, ‘comfortable’ and ‘fantastic’.

As well as appreciating the hospitality of the RSnYC the delegates also found the organization of the host club efficient and effective, with one delegate declaring that there was ‘perfect organization’ by the host club. Particular factors of this perfect organization mentioned by the delegates were the provision of multi-media and the excellent food that was provided.

Programme

The programme of the Forum was described as intense and wide-ranging as well as being interesting. The individual presentations were thought to be of a high quality and of value to the delegates. Delegates particularly valued hearing about the experiences of other clubs as these provided ideas which could be implemented back home. The willingness of the participants to engage in the topics and discuss the issues was much noted. One delegate said that the ‘openness of communication between participants was appreciated’. This was much in evidence during the presentations from San Francisco Yacht Club and the Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club which outlined their preparedness in the face of disaster. The willingness of these clubs to share what they learned from these events was much appreciated and highly valued by many delegates. Another area of interest was the differences in member engagement between clubs that operate throughout the year and those restricted by climate.

The question and answer sessions after the presentations were regarded highly as they were thought to ‘round out discussions’. There were some comments about the overrunning of some of the sessions but this was felt to be a necessary result of the wide-ranging discussions. As well as the formal presentations and discussions the informal interactions between delegates were felt to be very rewarding. It was noted that adequate time was allowed for this to take place.

Guest Speakers

The variety of guest speakers and their presentations generated a number of comments and were generally well received, particularly those from Jerome Pels on ISAF Developments and David Fuller of Piloté Media on social media. It certainly looks like the ISAF decision on boat selection for the Olympics is one likely to continue to be widely discussed.

Social Events

The social events were generally enjoyed by the delegates. The opportunity to dine and tour the House of Lords was deemed one of the highlights and described as a ‘fantastic experience’ and a ‘once in a lifetime deal’. However, the reception and dinner on HMS Warrier seems to have been the most popular amongst the delegates. Whilst these events often came at the end of a long day the sharing of all these experiences was seen as forming a bond between delegates.

Partner Programme

The partner programme was much praised, however, some delegates felt they missed out on some of these trips so would welcome an opportunity for a day trip that included them. However, the logistics of organizing and hosting such an event was noted.

Commodores’ Cup

On a lighter note one delegate wondered if a less ‘acrobatic’ boat could be used for the Commodores’ Cup as the boat used meant that not everyone was able to take part in the racing.

Broadening the ICOYC

As well as facilitating communication between top yacht clubs and participating in cruising events some delegates were keen for a broadening of ICOYC benefits to member clubs, particularly to younger members. One idea was for a junior exchange programme to be set up which would enable young sailors in ICOYC clubs to sail in different parts of the world. As well as broadening their sailing experience and meeting other like-minded young people it would be of particular benefit to those clubs whose location means that year round sailing is impossible.

Conclusion

The overwhelming view was the ICOYC Commodores’ Forum provided the opportunity of meeting many of the leaders of the top yacht clubs from around the world. For one delegate the excellent attendance at the event proved that the ICOYC is working. To put it simply one delegate said that she had ‘enjoyed every minute of it’ whilst another said the 7th ICOYC Commodores’ Forum was ‘the best ever’.

Alison Boyd
Newsletter Editor
The idea behind ICOYC Cruises is that the host clubs know the best places to go and so participants can be sure of having a good time. The weather we can’t control, of course, but it has been exceptionally good for all four ICOYC Cruises so far. This good fortune continued in 2012 after a windy start to the first week.

The 2012 ICOYC Cruise ran over two weeks, the first ranged over the South Coast of the UK, the second was around the Solent. A total of thirteen yachts took part, most only doing the second week. Just four of the larger yachts sailed the 50 miles along the South Coast to Weymouth, the location of the Olympic and Paralympic games. They had been delayed by a gale and had a rough passage west, but then the weather became glorious. A highlight in this first week was an evening with Dr Frank Newton at the Royal Dorset YC, talking about the Olympics race management.

The second week started on Sunday 3rd September with a full briefing on sailing in the local tides and currents, followed by a dinner at the Royal Southern YC. The next day we sailed towards Portsmouth, mooring in nearby Gosport for two nights. On the Monday evening there was a fascinating visit to the little-known Explosion Museum of naval armaments, with all manner of guns, torpedoes, missiles (including Polaris) – fascinating for the small boys amongst us, including your correspondent. After a lay-day in Portsmouth with its historical connections, and outlet shopping, the fleet set sail for Cowes with a white-sail race en route.

In Cowes on Wednesday 5th September we moored together in a convenient marina and, after drinks in the Sir Max Aitken Museum, had a formal dinner in the Royal Yacht Squadron overlooking the Solent.

On Thursday we sailed in little wind, but with a strong ebb tide to Yarmouth (IoW), staying there for two nights. There was walking on the Downs, overlooking the Needles rocks, and pubs and the Royal Solent YC to visit. Many went on to dine at ‘On the Rocks’, a restaurant where the diners do the work, cooking excellent raw food on hot lava stones. There we were treated to impromptu sea shanties led by Stephen Vine’s crew on the Hong Kong chartered yacht.

The fleet sailed across to Lymington – opposite Yarmouth – for the local Saturday market and later the now traditional ICOYC ‘appi’ and cocktail contest on the pontoon. There was excellent food and drink before dinner aboard or ashore. The next port – after another informal race – was the Beaulieu River, mooring off attractive Bucklers Hard where we enjoyed a BBQ in the gathering gloom of a September evening.

The cruise ended back at Hamble with prizes and mementos and many thanks to the organizers John Beardsley (RSrnYC) and Peter Innes-Ker (RTYC). A total of six ICOYC clubs took part with some fifty sailors. We all got to know each other well, enjoying their company and strengthening club ties.

We are planning a one-week cruise starting on 8th June 2013 from Kiel, Germany, and exploring the attractive Danish islands in the Southern Baltic where the weather is often good at this time of the year. Our guides to the best places to go will be cruising members of NRV. Some sailors from other European clubs have already planned to sail their yachts to the area, others are coming from further away and can easily charter from Kiel. If you are interested in hearing more, contact the ICOYC administration and we will keep you informed. It should be an excellent week.

John Stork
Immediate Past President ICOYC
Royal Southern Yacht Club Role at Forum

In the year that Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II celebrated her Diamond Jubilee, the Royal Southern Yacht Club celebrated its 175th year. The only other British Monarch to reign for 60 years was Her Majesty Queen Victoria, who ascended the throne in 1837, the same year that the Club was founded. Indeed, Queen Victoria became the Club’s first Royal Patron.

As the Olympics came to London, we, at the Royal Southern, were warming up to host the 7th ICOYC Commodores’ Forum.

Despite differences of culture, environment and country the challenges and issues faced by the world’s top yacht clubs are remarkably similar. We cannot underestimate the value of shared experience because there is nothing new in the world. It was Mark Twain who said that ‘history doesn’t repeat itself, but it does rhyme’, and the rhythm of the yacht club themes of management, membership, succession, youth, catering, leadership and communication are common wherever your club sits in the world.

Yacht clubs consist of many diverse activities from youth and training to global circumnavigation. From yacht racing to powerboating and from cruising in company to single hander journeys across the oceans, it is the Flag Officers and their knowledge who provide the oil which lubricates the various cogs in the gear box of the modern yacht club. They are often burdened by the conventions of a former era and of providing a balance between the requirement for continuity and the need for change.

Our aim was, therefore, to provide a venue where the Commodores, Flags Officers (past and present) and Club Managers could meet, discuss, debate and learn from common experience. In addition, we wanted to showcase our Club and the locale in which we operate. Early in the planning process we decided to try and balance sharing and gaining knowledge against providing some memorable experiences.

With the Board Meeting and AGM being hosted in London at the Royal Thames, we kicked off the proceedings with a formal dinner and tour of the House of Lords. This was hosted by Lord Wakeham, a long-standing member of the Royal Southern and the only living person to have been leader of both the House of Commons and the House of Lords. We were honoured to be granted this privilege.

Then on to Hamble, with a brief stop at Hampton Court Palace, one of Henry VIII’s palaces, to establish base camp at the Solent Hotel before the opening ceremony at the Royal Southern Yacht Club.

Our Club and the locale in which we operate.

Future Comodores' Cup in the Solent, the intrepid and occasionally dampened racers were welcomed back to the Club by a Brazilian batala band, adding to the international flavour of the week.

It was truly a delight to have representatives from all of the world’s best yacht clubs in the Royal Southern at one time. I doubt very much if any similar event has occurred in our 175 year history and the value of the information exchanged is immeasurable. The global network of the ICOYC can, in my opinion, only go from strength to strength and I, for one, am looking forward to Hong Kong in November 2013.

Commodore Mark Inkster
Royal Southern Yacht Club

Controlling Commodores

When I was asked to be the Principal Race Officer for the Commodores’ Cup at the Royal Southern Yacht Club, initially I thought that this was just another race to provide entertainment for the ICOYC Forum. Then I looked at the potential entry, and realized that we had a competition involving many top flight sailors and that the J/80s supplied from the RYS and Royal Thames Yacht clubs would be raced hard and skillfully even with next to no familiarization.

The format was to be simple. Two races of half an hour duration followed by the best three boats to go to the final race. The boats arrived from across the Solent during the morning and there was a mid-day draw for boats.

The light wind meant that we had to arrange towage to get the competitors to the racing area, lay a course, set a line and organize a scratch race management team consisting of a core of Royal Southern members reinforced by visiting commodores.

Fortunately the wind was fairly constant, though building in strength. I had planned a two lap race with windward leeward legs and a midway start/finish line. That way we could watch all that happened on the course. The rising wind meant that the first race was too short, but even so it led to high drama at the first mark rounding. A broken tiller catapulted Jim Burns helming the Royal Vancouver boat into the water and the subsequent lack of boat control launched another crew. Fortunately at this time of year the Solent is relatively warm with no sharks, alligators, Portuguese men-of-war or other major dangers to life. The mandatory PFDs required by the sailing instructions did their work and both were safely recovered.

For the first two races it looked as if the combined Australian team were going to put up a good showing, but it was all down to the final as the only race that mattered. This was won fairly convincingly by the local team from the Royal Southern. All three races had been visited by a Chinese Lion in all of its 175 years. Following the Commodores’ Cup in the Solent, the intrepid and occasionally dampened racers were welcomed back to the Club by a Brazilian batala band, adding to the international flavour of the week.

It was truly a delight to have representatives from all of the world’s best yacht clubs in the Royal Southern at one time. I doubt very much if any similar event has occurred in our 175 year history and the value of the information exchanged is immeasurable. The global network of the ICOYC can, in my opinion, only go from strength to strength and I, for one, am looking forward to Hong Kong in November 2013.

Philip Gage
PRO Commodores’ Cup
RSYS Celebrates Sesquicentenary

Jubilee, 1912

Australia’s senior yacht club, the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron on 8th July 2012 celebrated the 150th anniversary of its foundation, marking a proud role in the social and sporting history of Sydney, Australia’s oldest and largest city, and in the Squadron’s leadership of Australian yachting.

The ‘Squadron’ must rank as one of the great yacht clubs of the world, the historic clubhouse, ‘Carabella’, having sweeping views of Sydney Harbour and providing magnificent facilities for its members and their guests. Appropriately, members celebrated the sesquicentenary with a garden party on the lawns of ‘Carabella’.

As a yacht racing organization the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron provides the highest standards of race management for club, national and international championships and regattas. Members have been closely involved as volunteers in the running of America’s Cup match racing.

The Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron was formed on 8th July 1862 when the Honourable William Walker, a prominent colonial merchant in Sydney and a yacht owner, invited 18 other sailing enthusiasts to his office in Bridge Street to consider the formation of a yacht club. At this time, yachting had already become a popular recreation for Sydney’s successful merchants, professional men and shipowners of the still young colony of New South Wales.

As set out in its original rules and by-laws, the primary objective of the Squadron is the promotion of and encouragement of yachting generally, and of racing among sailing yachts in particular. Spanning three centuries, the Squadron has, and continues to achieve, that primary objective.

In 1862, the Squadron conducted the first ocean race in Australia, a dramatic race from Sydney Harbour to Newcastle and return between Chance and a new locally designed and built boat named Xarifa.

More than 80 years later Squadron members were strong supporters and winners of the early Sydney Hobart races, Australia’s premier ocean yacht race. Squadron member Trygve Halvorsen skippered Freya to three consecutive overall wins in the Hobart race in the 1960s.

In 1937, Harold Nossiter and his sons, Dick and Harold in the ketch Sirius completed the first circumnavigation of the world by an Australian yacht. Dick became a wartime naval hero and is still a member at the age of 102.

A wonderful annual event for members for the past 43 years has been the Squadron Cruise with a fleet sailing in company northwards from Sydney to Pittwater to enjoy a week of cruising, racing and social life afloat and ashore.

The Squadron has been a pioneer in developing youth development through sailing, with young sailors going on to win national and international events.

It has also encouraged women in sailing and at least three women members have represented Australia at the Olympics, Karyn Gojnic at the Seoul and Athens Games, and now Lucinda Whitty at the London Games.

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The ICOYC is active throughout the world, but is formally registered as a Canadian corporation. The registered office is:

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