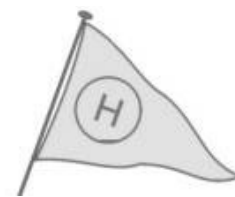


## Up The Creek: H(B)SC newsletter



### Editorial: Edward Skinner

We are now unfortunately into the tail end of our sailing season, though some of our more hardy sailors will take part in the Maylandsea Bay Winter series, I apologise for the lateness of this news letter, I have been hanging on in the hope that more articles would be submitted. In particular I apologise to the commodore Mark whose article was the first into the in-tray and thanks to contributors John Wilmott and John Case who have regularly supplied articles for this and previous issues. This will be my last issue as I intend to resign at the next AGM for two reasons. Most importantly to let someone fresh have a go, but secondly I rarely manage to get to the club so its difficult to know what is going on and report on it. A new publicity officer may also be better able to tackle other forms of social media for publicising the club.

I did manage to take part in our annual regatta week. Like last year it was decided to keep the week low key and not provide any organised sailing for youngsters as in previous pre COVID years. Personally, I missed the buzz about the club that the youngsters bring with them, but it does take a lot of organisation to be both safe and effective, maybe next year. The emphasis was to be on all water based activities

not just dinghy racing, although daily dinghy races were organised. The first day was very windy, limiting participants, but two races were still held. In contrast the next day had very light winds which died away to almost nothing. With only Dave Islin in his Solo actually managing to complete the shortened course within the time limit. The rest of the weeks sailing took place with more cooperative winds and everyone was able to go out on the water and have a good sail, Barry Knight came out the eventual winner of the sailing series at the end of the week.

Kayaks were in evidence during the week as was swimming and generally just messing about in the water around the jetty. Apart from the Sunday night quiz and a bring your own BBQ evening there were no organized social events. Though a pre booked evening meal was available each evening for those wanting one and of course the bar was open providing refreshments.

The British summer for once provided good conditions for the campers and it was nice to chat and catch up with old and newer club members during the week. It would be great if we could elect a new social secretary and set up a social group to organise the regatta and other events next year.

### Commodores Column: Mark Batt

So we are well through our sailing season, the sailing has been a little quiet due to a low turn out on the water but fingers crossed it will improve.

We had a great turn out on our Open Day we have gained over 10 new memberships. Some Sailing some Paddle Boarding and Kayakers, The club has bought four brand new kayaks for club members to use, they are stored under the veranda at the club just open them with your gate key.

Please lock up the kayak store once you have removed your kayak, there is a trolley for the double kayak (this can take two adults and a small child) and a new H trolley for the new single kayaks.

We have three more on order so they will have one each. Please don't drag the kayaks on the ground or jetty as they are only 2/3mm thick and will soon wear through, always wash them down before putting them away the wash down tap turns on by a switch above the race box door. Please remember not to go out any further than Mundon Spit on the club boats or kayaks. It is a rule that

has been put in place to protect members. If you want a trip to Osea Island or further please talk to us and we can arrange a safety boat to keep an eye on you but this will take planning it can't be done on the day.

Please remember they are for all members to share, if more than four people want to use them please talk to each other and share the tide. Just recently we have had people use them as a tender to get to their cruiser, other members turned up on that Friday and could not use them because of this. Last week we had a family use them on a Sunday evening only to leave a kayak unattended on the jetty while they went for a walk, other members luckily noticed this and moved it into the club grounds to stop anyone taking it.

The Solo Open was great, the weather finally turned the wind up to a nice 4/5. The sun was out, just a shame we had low numbers turn up, but everyone was happy with the days sailing. Thanks to Rod, Tony and the safety boat crews to help me run a good open meeting. We took the decision to cancel the Laser open to show respect for the Queen who sadly passed away that weekend , it will be rescheduled.

We had an inspection on the Galley and Bar in August thanks to Barry Knights cleaning and scrubbing and a DE clutter we managed to get a five star rating. The Committee has taken on the advice from the inspector and has agreed that any food prep should only be undertaken by a person that has recently passed the Food Hygiene Level Two so I'm sorry to say if you have not passed the exam you CAN NOT Prep food behind the Galley.

Are we all happy with the food and drinks served by the Galley and Bar would you like us to go more high end and get a better products this will cost more to purchase but I know some people don't mind that it will put on about £1 for a better roll and contents, the same with the beer and wine.

We plan to start the Men's changing room boiler upgrade later this year, this should only take a couple of weeks as most of the work has been done by Barry and Bob last winter. The club is looking into extending the current veranda we are going to contact Maldon District Planning department shortly to arrange a meeting.

Lastly Theresa Henderson has decided to resign from the Committee and Bar with immediate effect I would hope you would all join me in saying thanks to Theresa for putting in a lot of hard work for the club over many years.

Geoff Kent and Caroline will now be taking on the bar duties for the club.

Please contact me with any ideas on how we can improve your sailing club on [markbatt0@gmail.com](mailto:markbatt0@gmail.com).

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## **The Cases adventures with paddle boards, kayaks, and anything to do with water: John Case**

### **Paddle boards:**

My daughter (and club member) Marie in August 2021 said 'dad why not try paddle boarding?'. She mentioned she had found a course on line for paddle boarding at Hadleigh Country Park by a

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company called Saltwater SUP <https://saltwater-sup.co.uk/> . I thought why not, so it was fully booked at a Saturday in September 2021.

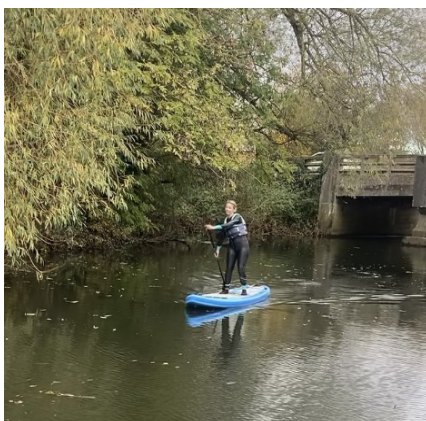
With wetsuits and buoyancy aids we turned up at Hadleigh Country Park and followed the signs to the reservoir. The instructors first showed us and the other participants how to assemble the fins for the paddle boards, assemble the paddle and adjust the paddle length to suit our heights.

What followed was a detailed but interesting and informative instruction on paddle boarding. This covered the safety aspects including the effects of wind and tide. Then it was time to get on the water. The lake is nicely situated at the top of Hadleigh downs The instructors went out on water with us and we were shown how to get onto the board, how to move from kneeling to standing and balancing. Where to stand on the board.



I had previously tried paddle boarding on a borrowed board at the sailing club. I was able to stand up but had great difficulty in maneuvering. I could go in straight line but turning ended up in very long arcs as I was obviously doing something wrong. We were shown how to turn the board in different directions using different techniques .How to fall from the board, which was especially important for me. How to get on the board after falling off. Also in the event of high wind occurring what to do to enable us to get back to the shore safely. It was an excellent course and gave us a grounding in the basics of paddle boarding. We would highly recommend it for anyone thinking of paddle boarding or already doing it.

Following the course we were both excited to get going and purchased two paddle boards from the iRocker paddle board company and couldn't wait to try them on our own. Our first attempt was at Paper Mill Lock on the Chelmer & Blackwater Navigation an excellent sheltered situation. We took



our paddle board back packs down to the water's edge and proceeded to pump up the boards. Using the manual pumps this takes about 200 pumps to reach 15 psi, the required pressure. I must warn you this takes quite a bit of effort so felt pretty knackered before attempting to paddle board. We have subsequently purchased an electric pump which is excellent and recommended. We both managed to get on the boards and started to paddle in the direction of Heybridge basin in mid-November 2021. It was very windy and the first bridge near Paper Mill lock acted like a wind tunnel to amplify the wind speed. We learnt the lesson that if it's too windy, > than F 3 it's probably too windy. Basically you act like a sail when standing

so the windage makes it difficult in high winds. However we tried all the things we learnt on the

course and it was great to be out on the water for the first time on our own it was even better afterwards as we had a great lunch to recover at the superb Paper Mill Lock cafe, overlooking the canal.



Our next paddle boarding adventure was at the sailing club and we ventured out to the other side of the creek into the salting's channels. We joined the Club Paddle board / Kayak Whats App group which is a great way of letting other paddle board members know of paddle planned board trips and to see if others want to join you. Following our announcement on Whats App we were joined by Mark Batt and Tony Everitt who gave excellent advice on how to use the tidal flows to negotiate our trip. It was a long trip for Marie and me to the Mundon Spit. We made it and stopped for refreshment and a soggy sandwich. Must purchases a waterproof dry bag to prevent soggy sandwiches. The wind was against on the way back to the club but it was good exercise. My Granddaughter Lily aged 12 also had a go for the first time at the Club and put me to shame with her innate ability on the paddle board.

Next was a trip to Studland Bay Dorset early July 2022. The weather was superb 25C with low wind and perfectly calm sea. Ideal for paddle boarding. People were even taking their dogs on the paddle boards. Studland bay and Swanage beach face East and are sheltered from the prevailing westerlies and low tidal range so both are ideal places to paddle board at any state of the tide.



#### Kayaking at the club:

Brenda and I have also used the excellent clubs two man and a dog/ child kayak at the club on a trip to Mundon Spit in August . It was a great experience and I even munched on some Samphire there.

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### **SEALS & SAMPHIRE: John Wilmott**

Great to see so many paddlers – both kayakers and those who bizarrely insist on standing up – out on the water.



The new club kayakers are proving very popular. They are highly manoeuvrable, stable and fairly quick, if a little cramped for the longer-legged.

TIP: You can adjust the angle of the paddle blades with the push-button in the middle of the shaft. Slightly off-set blades allow easier, more natural paddling. Once set, just let the shaft rotate through your left hand as you go along.

I've been out on my own kayak, the big banana thing, a few times this summer and on the last adventure got close to a couple of seals. I suspect these were a mother and older cub. They were curious

and as I drifted, they kept popping up their heads, closer and closer. I reckon the pair got to within about 20 feet before deciding fishing was more interesting.

Talking of fishing, I tried a few casts with a spinning lure off the spit. Ron reckons he's had some success here with sea bass, but all I hooked was weed. Pity I couldn't hook one of the moronic jet-skiers who kept zooming past.

The seals usually hang out towards the top of our creek on the left, past North Shore buoy, but on a recent trip I saw a lone seal in the other direction, past Maylandsea Bay.

There have been reports in the past about seals hauling themselves on to the decks of the moored keelboats to sunbathe, though I'd not heard of any recent sightings down there.

Another club paddler reported a mother and young cub - maybe this year's offspring - towards the spit. Over the past two or three years the herd has been slowly growing and at low tide you can see up to a dozen lying on the mud if you walk up the sea wall (binoculars are useful).

On behalf of the club could I please remind any newer members who are not used to our jetty that the non-slip surface is highly abrasive and kayaks – or any other equipment – should not be pulled across it. Try doing it with your knees and you'll know what I mean. (There is a first-aid kit in the clubhouse).

I had a big surprise last time I was out on the kayak. Opposite the club, on a very high tide, I saw a number of tiny birds flitting among what was left of the exposed saltings. They were not shy and I got close enough to have a fairly safe guess that they were greenfinches. These are garden or meadow birds – what were they doing out at sea? Any ornithologists in the club please let me know!

Another reason to go out kayaking is to forage for samphire (yes, I know, it's a bit Guardian reader). For those who don't know, samphire grows on the saltings. It is a succulent plant that looks a like a tiny, multi-branched cactus.

It tends to flourish on the lower 'slopes' of the saltings so the best time to harvest is at half-tide. Technically it is a protected species and should not be pulled out by its roots. I try to snap off the top half of a plant or just a few 'branches' – easy to do with your fingers – so the rest of the plant can re-grow.

Samphire is available in bigger supermarkets but it usually comes from Morocco or Israel (not exactly known for their salt marshes). It's much more fun, and of course free, to find your own. I pick it on the saltings on the other side of the creek but if you don't want to kayak, it grows to the left of our club across the little bridge.

To cook samphire, the best way is to boil for a minute, dry it off then lightly fry in butter. It can also be steamed. Naturally salty, samphire goes perfectly with salmon and other fish but can be used like any other green vegetable. I chop it up into pasta sauces!

We're past the best season for samphire now as it tends to get woody in the autumn, but next year save yourself a little on the grocery bill.

Back on dry land, it's surprising how many people who are long-term members of the club, or who even live in Maylandsea, who don't know about the 'circuit' walk.

Walk up towards Steeple from the club and the sea wall turns inland down Mayland Creek (confusingly, our club is on Lawling Creek). Although you can see the caravans of Steeple Bay Park opposite, it's pretty lonely up here. Continue on (it can be a bit overgrown) and later you'll see some fishing lakes to your right.

Despite the jet ski morons this creek is an important site for wading birds so if you're into that, take your binos.

Towards the end you'll come to Pigeon Dock. There are still a few signs of the wooden jetty that, amazingly, was once used as a dock for loading and unloading goodness-knows-what before it all gave way to silting and nature.

Turn inland here (marked as a footpath) through an avenue of trees, which during the summer are dripping with damsons and miniature plums. You may have noticed that the trees on the border of our own club grounds produce a small yellow fruit, known as a mirabelle, though one of the locals nicked most of them in July to make jam!

Anyway, the route back to the club passes through a field with horses (which for some reason don't like Vicki), then you skirt past the water treatment plant and can either take a path with many more fruit trees at the back of houses to emerge on The Drive near the top of North Drive, or walk down the gravel section of Nipsells Chase to return to the sea wall and the club.

I think it's about three and a half miles overall, by which time you will need to visit the thirst aid station in the clubhouse, if you can drag Geoff away from winding up people on the balcony.

### **Dinghy trophy results:**

We run mainly joint racing with Maylandsea Bay sailing club. Recorded below are the first H(B)SC sailors in each completed trophy so far:

|                              |                        |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Spring Series                | Martin Tarling         |
| Summer Series                | Martin Tarling         |
| Easter Series                | Neil Clark             |
| Galley Cup                   | Mark Batt/Tony Everitt |
| Helms Trophy                 | Vicki Riley            |
| Osea Cup                     | Martin Tarling         |
| Hells Bells                  | Neil Clark             |
| Maylandsea Bay Challenge Cup | Mark Batt/Tony Everitt |
| RNLI pennant                 | Martin Tarling         |
| Bob Knights Trophy           | Mark Batt/Tony Everitt |
| Barts Bash                   | Martin Tarling         |