

CROMARTY BOAT CLUB, Sailing Secretary's Report 2017

RACING ACTIVITY

Cromarty boat club member participation in the MYA series of races has continued in strength and has provide the bulk of yacht racing for members.

A total of ten different club boats sailed in at least one of the ten race series. Individual participation of Cromarty Boats in local Moray Firth was as follows

Baccarat	Tom Paling	4 events
Sea Jay	Robert Hogg	7 events
Sand Dollar	Jim Cockburn	4 events
Katie May	Ross Couper	5 events
Ness Piper	John Smith	1 event
Moonshadow	Willie Smeaton	2 events
Tennessee Waltz	Danny Coutts	1 event
Fram	Mike Burns	6 event
Cafrefree	Ronnie Macdonald	3 events
Lysbeth	Rob Bashford	1 event

Once again the most popular MYA race event this year was the NKCP race (North Kessock Community Pier) jointly organised by Cromarty Boat Club and the NKCP trust. This attracted a total of sixteen entries two more than in 2016. Caley Marina hosted the prize giving with a free BBQ and refreshments in addition to providing reduced berthing fees for visiting competitors. This social event once again provided an ideal opportunity for club members to meet up with marina residents.

Our annual club regatta was the second most popular MYA event in the area with a total of eleven entries and in addition the regatta feeder race from Invergordon to Cromarty was held again.

The Cromarty BC four race pursuit race series event failed to encourage any participants on the scheduled dates. The committee have therefore decided that the George Selvester trophy be awarded to Robert Hogg in recognition of his very successful season in the MYA series of races.

The outcome of the 2017 MYA race series and the 2017 Cromarty BC Annual Regatta were as follows

MYA RACING

MYA Fast Handicap Series

First	Circe.	John Prentice	Invergordon BC
Second	Hava	Diarmid Hogan	Chanonry SC
Third	Baccarat	Tom Paling	Cromarty BC

MYA Slow Handicap Series

First	Sea Jay	Robert Hogg	Cromarty BC (Awarded CBC Glen Ord Quaich)
Second	Fram	Mike Burns	Cromarty BC
Third	Mustang	Dave Bilsand	Invergordon BC

Overall MYA Team Trophy Cromarty BC (fourth Year in succession)

CROMARTY BOAT CLUB Events & Trophies

Cromarty BC Annual Regatta

Fast H'cap Open Winner	Copland Cup	Rhythm n Blue John Burgis IBC
Fast H'cap First CBC boat	Mizpah Trophy	Moonshadow, Willie Smeaton

Slow H'cap Open Winner	CBC Regatta Challenge	Wind of Clynder, Douglas Cawthorne, Inverness Marina
Slow H'Cap First CBC boat	Farmers Trophy	Fram, James Burns

Annual Regatta Feeder Race

Open Winner	Dolphin Ecosse Trophy	Rhythm n Blue John Burgis IBC
First CBC boat	Royal Hotel Cup	Sea Jay, Robert Hogg

George Selvester Trophy Robert Hogg. In recognition of his very successful support of the MYA series of Races

Sea Angling Competition CFPA Angling Trophy Sy Soften (Cromarty Resident)

Doris May Plate Services to cruising Jim Cockburn for very actively promoting mid week day sailing

If anyone wants to see the full years racing results then the sailing secretary can supply this information.

CBC CRUISING ACTIVITY

Weekend Cruise in Company

In addition to the planned annual Commodores Cruise, three weekend cruises were scheduled during the season.

Danny 15/16 April	cancelled due poor weather
Jim 29/30 April	cancelled due poor weather
Mike 2,3,4 June Old Bar,	No CBC members took part
Steve Wick Regatta 16,17 18 June	see Danny Coutts' report below
Jim CinC Lossiemouth 15/16 September	see Jim Cockburn's report below

Mid week Cruise in Company

Despite a lack of support last year in 2016, members were once again invited to turn up at the harbour on Wednesday or Saturday mornings to muster for local day or weekend trips around the Moray Firth. Jim Cockburn was out on Sand Dollar most weeks but, otherwise, there wasn't a lot of interest apart from one of our newer members, Ann Lloyd, who crewed Sand Dollar regularly on day trips to destinations such as Rosemarkie, Nairn and Invergordon.

Annual Commodores Cruise

The annual cruise started on Saturday 1st July from Cromarty through the Caledonian Canal, A total of four boats were involved in this west coast of Scotland cruise

Baccarat	Tom Paling,
Moonshadow	Willie Smeaton
Timpani	Barry Pickles
Lazy Bones	Ian McBay

In summary the racing season was very well supported by CBC members however our local cruising activities have stagnated somewhat with a lower level of support despite attempts at both scheduling events in the calendar & or having ad hoc or impromptu days where members simply turn up mid week or at weekends and agree a local destination for the day.

Cromarty boat club continued their support of the Cromarty Gala running two events as follows

The Angling Competition which had nine competitors, thanks are due to Barry Pickles for organising boats to take out the anglers and the CHT for the donation of a suitable and refreshing prize. The event raised £ 40 which was donated to the local RNLI branch.

The Have a Go sailing day saw queues forming, unlike last year, and thanks are due to Ross Couper for taking so many visitors out on the water.

Detailed CBC members cruise reports

Spring Cruise in Company to Wick (Marina Open Day), Tennessee Waltz, Danny Coutts

I should have reported the club cruise to Wick was also a lovely weekend. Tennessee Waltz with myself, Ian MacKay and Iain McBay. Joined by Maggieann on the Saturday. Steve Whiteford and his family on Ocean Gem. We departed Inverness Marina on the Thursday Morning at 04:30 followed by Ocean Gem on the Friday. and we're made most welcome by the harbour master. The Friday night saw us entertained to a reception ashore, The Saturday was the lifeboat open day and harbour day followed by a dance in the old fish market. A fantastic evening/night with fancy dress. Would recommend the weekend to any one. There were 31 visiting boats. We both departed on Sunday morning. Unfortunately. Motor sailed most of the way in both directions. By the way. All entertainment and BBQ were free and only donations requested.

Steve also had a great days fishing outside the harbour. All in all a great weekend.

Autumn Cruise in Company to Lossiemouth, Sand Dollar, Jim Cockburn

Pleased to report on an enjoyable weekend cruise to Lossiemouth. Two boats participated - Ness Piper & Sand Dollar. John sailed single-handed while Ralph crewed for me.

John departed Seaport Marina around 0900 on Sat & we met up off the Sutors about 1300 (John having patiently awaited my appearance from 12 noon). The first part of the outward passage was a mix of decent enough breeze & not enough breeze but from mid-way across Burghead bay we had a good F4/5-NNE accompanied by a big swell. Arrived Lossie at 1830. A good evening was had by all aboard Ness Piper. Windier than expected overnight & first thing this morning but after bacon & egg breakfast Ralph & I left Lossiemouth at 0930 while John left an hour later Still quite a big swell but wind F3/4 - NNE/N. Wind up & down for most of return passage but fell away latterly so motor sailed the last few miles back John has stopped off at Cromarty & will return to Seaport during the week.

Earlier in the season, I did a similar cruise to Lossie, also with Ralph aboard, and accompanied by friends who sail out of Avoch (Sarah Clair, a Jaguar 24) the highlight of which was a close encounter with a minke whale midway to Burghead. We circled for fully ten minutes watching it breaching!

My other trip away on Sand Dollar was a single-handed cruise to Findhorn at the beginning of July, overnighing on one of the visitor moorings. Wonderful sunset and sunrise viewing.

2017 Cruise West Coast & Orkney Cruise Octopus, Oliver Chapple, Heather Charlie & Frannie & Andrew

On 27th July, Heather and I set off intending to do sea trials but as everything was working fine we decided to head for The Canal Sea loch. After securing our lines there was a wait until Bloodhound arrived and took her place. We've seen Prince Phillip's old yacht numerous times and she still looks a beauty and impressed Heather with all the varnish work.

The next day, Charlie and Frannie arrived for a meal in the Jamaican Restaurant. Curried Goat is always good. Next morning we set off from Seaport having first warped off having got blown onto the bank making springing off difficult. Jig and jigger down loch Ness with the new sails drawing well. Loch Inn and Eagle Barge meant no cooking and happy ladies. A very pleasant few days which we were reluctant to end when the girls caught the bus back to Inverness at Laggan lochs.

Charlie and I pressed on to Banavie and when he went for his morning run noticed an advert for "Young Trad Tour". Took the train in to Ft William for an evening of Celtic Culture ... excellent and we bought their CD's.

Wed 2/8 saw us on the Ft. William Yacht Club pontoon waiting for Andrew and when he arrived we moved Octopus onto the club mooring for the night.

The following morning saw us up in good time to be off at 07.00 and make the best of the tide. Ballachulish Bay meant going under the bridge to explore. We tied up at two different pontoons but neither were near any sort of pub or shop so disappointed we retraced our line to sail for Oban and berth in Kerrera. Over to Oban Inn on the ferry for pints then back to the marina restaurant

Frid 4/8 Oban to Tobermoray. Wind 4/5 and a pleasant sail with Jig and Jigger averaging 5 knots. Fog and horrid rain until we arrived when sun burnt it all away. The West Highland Fleet left Tobermoray for Oban this morning and passed us in the opposite direction in full flight.. a colourful cloud of spinnakers .

Tobermoray to Inverie (Loch Nevis) Lovely sail with a force 4 N/W breeze pushing us to 6.5/7.2 knots under all sail. Charlie had never been to The Old Forge so dingy out and a pint we would have. What a disappointment ... the new Belgian owner is miserable and rude and the beer wasn't great either. As we motored back 'The Lord of the Glens' arrived which maybe explains why he wasn't interested in mere yachties !!! Did he realise we'd come to spend money.

Sun 6/8 left Inverie Bay for Plockton via Eilean Donan Castle. Sailing started well in a SW4 and we had 5.0 knots however it dropped to 2/3 and we were soon down to 4.1. The Castle looked grand from the sea and it was great fun creeping down to it with an eye on the depth gauge. A very atmospheric place to be.

We always wanted to visit Plockton and picked up an easy mooring buoy but after that, heavy rain delayed our trip to the Plockton Hotel – venison collops for three in the company of an American lady and her daughter who chatted about the ski resorts we'd all been to.. By the time we headed back at about ten, the dingy needed to be bailed out and we were well soaked as we climbed up the ladder ... pleasantly full but keen to put the heating on.

Mon 7/8 another nice sail from Plockton to Portree on Skye where there are good mooring buoys but rather close together. Into the dingy for a shower at the youth hostel at £3 a go. Luxurious towels included so that seemed a good enough deal. Back to the boat to find the next door crew effusive in their apologies for having 'taken our wind' earlier in the day Very nautical types !!!

Tues 8/8 was a birthday so was always going to be a fun day. Portree to Stornaway via the Shiant Islands ... a cracking day with good wind and fine sailing in the company of a large pod of dolphins .. all over the place..playing in the bow wave .. beautiful to see. Later on there were puffins and seals and then more dolphins. The seas seemed alive with the critters. Arrived Stornaway for info at the Tourist Office .. we fancied the cinema .. the only film was Captain Underpants ...so no thanks !

Wed 9/8 Strong winds .. force 9 forecast on XC weather so decided to head back to Loch Inver on the mainland and hunker down. When we arrived Charlie went for his run and Andrew and I went to explore the ablutions and were somewhat surprised to see Princess Anne and Tim Lawrence coming our way. Their yacht was a little way from us.

Having decided we would have a couple of days R&R , lash all the sails down, hide from the weather and let it blow through, we were delighted to find the Assynt Games were on the Friday. "Always the first Friday in August"

Thursday was to be the birthday celebration in 'Caberfeich' so scollops, venison, pudding wine .. the lot ..followed by 4 and a half fiddle, 2 guitar, 2 flute and a bodhran .. pronounced boron .. a very special and unexpected musical evening.

Frid 11/8 The Assynt Games. Now you either love or hate the Highland games but these were sublime . 3 legged races, hill races, shot, hammer and caber .. piping competitions and lots of highland dancing all carried off with the background of massed pipe and drums. A very good day spent in and out of the beer tent enjoying the atmosphere spending our money in the best of ways.

Sat 12/8 Lochinver to Kinlochbervie .. a short day today to explore this tiny port. Tiny, but wonderfully sheltered and a huge centre for the herring at one time.

Charlie off for his run .. Andrew and I to take the scenic route to the hotel on the hill. Tremendous panorama only helped by drinking the well kept Dark Island.

Sun 13/8 was to be Kinlochbervie to Eriball but in fact it went so well that we carried on to Scrabster. Cape Wrath was a psychological hurdle and one we didn't take lightly. We plotted our course 6 miles off and kept fully to our plan. As usual , a well thought out plan and two heads or two and a half if you count Charlie ! .. helps to keep us safe. Wicked currants along the north coast and again dolphins for company. .. sea quite lumpy after the storms.

Scrabster is a very busy place and we entered between a scheduled Ro-Ro and two large fishing boats

Monday 14/8 Set off from Scrabster at 7.00 in a calm sea .. very different from the lumps of Sunday. Sailed well until we furled at 11.00 preparatory to coming into Stromness .. the roller-reefing had jambed and wouldn't wind in the sail. As the wind had got up to a good force 5, we lashed lots of rope round to keep it from getting damaged. The pontoons are rather awkward with hoops instead of horns and it took several attempts to get us secure. A lovely girl called Gemima took our fees .. she said Gemima was a common name where she came from in Shetland.

Tues 15/8 Stromness to Kirkwall. We plotted a route to go north to Kirkwall. Coming out into the open at 11.00, it was a very big sea, the nearest we've ever been to a broach . O felt distinctly queezy ! Wind and tide made for good speed and a relatively easy passage after that initial spell clipping along at 9.5 and occasionally 11 knots. We had estimated a time of 9 hours and the 51 mile trip took 7 and a half.

Wed 16/8 Time to play tourist with Charlie. Bus to the Italian Chapel then a walk across the causeway to St Margarets Hope where we were all disgruntled not to find a hostelry.

The Cathedral and Museum in Kirkwall where they had a write up of the Viking longship that we saw dismantled in Shetland three years ago. That was most interesting to see the explanation of the weather and their mishap.

The 'Real Again' was a great way to end the day with music and humour.

Thur 17/8 took us to Scara Brae and the Manor House. Again a first for Charlie and well worth another visit. The distillery at Highland Park couldn't be missed and was a big hit. In the evening we dragged Andrew to a poetry evening with the promise of one or two Dark Island. He was not too enthusiastic but it turned out to be a really fun and special evening of great entertainment led by the very gifted and professional Steve Pottinger and Emma Pursehouse

Frid 18/8 An uneventful trip down to Wick where cruise ships were expected and the HM was very particular as to where we moored so passengers could disembark easily. Ate at 'Bord de L'eau' on snails, bouillabaisse, duck and monkfish sitting in the conservatory admiring stair-rods of rain. Old Pultney had to be visited of course and a tour round the curious shaped copper stills. There's always good craic to be had on a whisky trip

Sun 20/8 Saw Charlie off on the 8.0 train and then cast off ourselves to go down the coast to find our way into Lybster, a very narrow entrance but well worth exploring this charming little port. Super little café and a well organised and very tidy and interesting museum. A trip to the top of the hill to see the old spring and catch the marvellous views of masses of wind turbines being constructed out at sea.

Helmsdale was next and surprised at the lack of bouyage but two leading marks gave us a clear enough entrance. As we went through ,a local fisherman in his boat shouted " cut it a bit fine " We realised what he meant as we slid through the mud to the pontoon. Thirsty work and 'The Bannockburn' called for a pint but it was off .. when we took it back ... "no-one else has complained.... " we took ourselves back to the boat leaving the pints untouched, though paid for !!!

Mon 21/8 Not much wind today but we thought Findhorn would be good for a visit. Not a big deal getting in but the 'landfall buoy' is missing. Always pays to apply a bit of common sense rather than relying slavishly on bouyage. Always a pleasant place to visit .. cafes to visit, pubs to try, the club house for a pint and finally a good pub meal

Tues 22/8 Left Findhorn at 12.00 and the channel seemed narrower than we expected. The sand bank under the water was very clear and seemed very close. Made us think Octopus might be best to come in or out within one hour of high water and preferably on a rising tide !

16.30 moored up in the marina at Inverness .. A great trip .. no problems and all boxes ticked .. a very successful summer cruiseperhaps the Emerald Isle next year and perhaps with the girls on board !!!