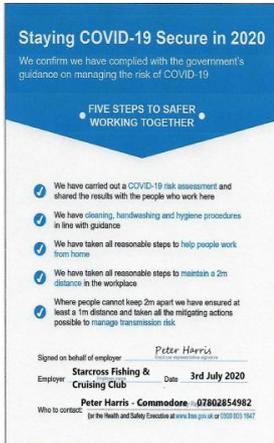


### Commodores Update January 2021



*Happy New Year* - I hope you have all had a nice Christmas despite all the restrictions. I think you will all agree it's a relief to see the back of 2020. We are certainly not out of the woods yet but hopefully we can look forward to getting back to some sort of normality with good Fishing, Cruising & Boozing at some point this year!

You will have seen in the last Christmas Draw Update that the committee decided keep the club closed over the festive season and now with the increased risks from the new strain of Covid and the Tier 3 restrictions I'm not sure how long it will be before we are able to safely reopen. Rest assured we will continue to review things regularly and I'll keep you all updated with any changes we make.

## **SFCC Christmas Draw**

### **2020 Prize Winners**



- £250 Cash Treasure Chest - Geoff Lawson**
- Garmin Hand Held GPS – Ian Hamilton**
- Luxury Hamper – Tony Womersley**
- Seago Waterproof Binoculars – Angela McClure**
- River Exe Cafe £100 Voucher – Debbie Pearce**
- Westcountry Cruising Manual  
and Log Book – Kevin Williams**
- Set of Nautical Mugs - Richard**
- Marinescene £75 Voucher – John & Carol Butcher**
- Plymouth Gin Hamper – S. Beckett**
- SFCC Regalia £50 Voucher – Mike Richardson**



On Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> December our President Jennie Sampson drew the Winning Tickets for the Christmas Draw.

It was a very different affair this year to what we are used to, but it was great to still be able to give away some fabulous prizes.

There were a few hiccups with our Live Streaming but we were able to get footage on Facebook and our Web Site for you all to see.

I'm pleased to report that we have managed to cover all our draw costs and even made a small profit – a great achievement in the current climate. Thank you Paul & Becky for organizing it all, Jennie for drawing the winners, Kerry for taking the phone payments and Neil & Maxine for the Video.

I would also like to thank Geoff Lawson the lucky winner of £250 Treasure Chest who kindly donated part of his winnings to the club – a lovely gesture – thank you.

Regrettably we have taken the decision to postpone the Annual Presentation Night which would have been held on 16<sup>th</sup> January. We will reschedule it once the Covid restrictions allow us to do so safely.

I'm always pleased to include contributions from members and here is a poem written by David Goss 'Stargazing over a Compass'



### Waterside Team

#### Rear Commodore

I have nothing new to report. Ongoing works on pontoons and waterfront are in hand. I will call for volunteers when the weather allows – *Happy New Year*

*Paddy Smith - Rear Commodore*

*Brandybottle.paddy@hotmail.co.uk*



### Membership

#### *Your Membership Renewals were due on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021*

A big thank you to everyone who has already paid their subscription, it's a great help in these difficult times. It's not too late to take advantage of the £10 discount as long as you renew before 31<sup>st</sup> January. Unfortunately we cannot take cash at the moment, but you can pay by Cheque, Bacs or by Card over the phone – full details of how to pay are on the letter attached to your renewal.

*Lyn Allies - Membership Secretary*

*sfccmembership@hotmail.co.uk*

### Looking Back Over 2020

When I penned last year's January Update, Covid was a word I'd never even heard of and here we are 12 months later and it's constantly in our everyday vocabulary and causing global havoc!



We started the year with Presentation Night with Keith Graham presenting the Trophies. Hannah and Faye Bentley, who may well be the youngest ever recipients of a club Trophy, received the **Blue Boy Trophy** for the 'Best Achievement for a Newcomer' by learning to paddle board, kayak and to crew their parents boat.

At the AGM Jennie Sampson became our first Lady President when she took over the mantle from Paul Goody. She also has the distinction of being our first Lady Commodore. All very well deserved after years of service to the club.



We had a great Friday Forum when David Littlefield and his RNLI Sea Safety Team gave a talk and checked our Life Jackets, which certainly gave some of us a bit of a shock. No matter how good they look on the outside there can be some hidden surprises! As both Nigel Watsham and I found out.



### **STARGAZING OVER A COMPASS**

*a poem by David Goss (Kurumba)*

Polaris hangs due North to guide  
Anxious mariners bleary-eyed,  
To havens where safe berths await  
And loving arms of soft bed-mates.

Yon' Southern Cross like Polaris true  
Antipodean sailors grew,  
To love this constellation bright  
To helm ships thru' the stormy night.

Each day at dawn our morning star  
Turns east eyes who would an avatar,  
Seek for guidance thru' the day  
To shed night's terrors and to pray.

Look Westward at the fall of night  
And you will see there shining bright,  
The lovely Venus gliding by  
A lantern on a velvet Sky.

With apologies to Samuel Taylor Coleridge

With the Covid Lockdown fast becoming the focus of our attentions we just managed to slot in a Comedy Night with Tank Sherman by the skin of our teeth.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> March the Men played their last Skittles Match away to the Exe Tornados. It was a very close game and both teams were tied as they went into the beer leg, but after a nail biting finish our boys came out on top winning by 8 pins. There's nothing like the thought of a free pint to focus the mind.

We sadly lost Ken Gove and Michael Green in 2020. Ken and his wife Jennifer were members for over twenty years and enjoyed cruising and meeting new friends in their boat 'Ocean Arias'.

Michael moved to Cockwood with his wife Judy after a career in journalism, which included working in Fleet Street for the Daily Mail and Telegraph and also becoming the Industrial Correspondent for ITV News. He and Judy were also longstanding members and Michael was also a past Commodore of Cockwood Boat Club.



Lockdown was very frustrating, our boats were already to launch but remained high and dry. By June some of us were able to get afloat and the fishing competitions got underway, but the cruisers were still frustrated as they could only day sail as they were not allowed sleep onboard.

Amazingly despite lockdown we continued to recruit over 20 new members while we were closed.

We reopened the Club on 4<sup>th</sup> July – it was all very different with social distancing and table service but at least we were open again and could see our friends. On Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> August we opened the Brunel Restaurant in the function room on Saturday Nights with our new Chef John at the helm. The new format has proved to be very popular and was well supported.



With the sleeping restrictions relaxed the cruisers also started to get away but the continued social distancing measures still put a damper on things.

The Small boats weren't so lucky despite Richard Bently's best efforts the weather curtailed nearly all the planned cruises. But on August 27<sup>th</sup>, after an afternoon of torrential rain and thunderstorms the sun came out and we were able to get on the water.

Those who made it had a great trip up to Turf and a lovely outdoor social evening. Twelve members (arriving in 4 boats, 2 bikes and a car) enjoyed drinks and food on what turned out to be a lovely calm evening after the storms.



By August we had also been able to restart our RYA Powerboat 2 Courses with reduced numbers to enable social distancing, but sadly all our planned winter shorebased courses had to be postponed.

October got off to a bad start with Storm Alex causing havoc. Unfortunately several boats sustained damage and we lost a couple of floats from the pontoon – not the best way to end an already disappointing season. Since its inception we have lost on average one float per year from the pontoon, but I'm pleased to say the replacements are of a different design and so far are proving much more resilient.

In November Cas Marshall our Honorary Secretary reluctantly stood down as she was finding it increasingly difficult to juggle a demanding full time job with the club's business. Nigel Watsham took over in an acting roll until his appointment can be ratified at the next AGM.

To round off the year the Christmas Draw did bring a little cheer to some of our members who were lucky enough to win prizes.

I know a lot of clubs and organisations have struggled financially in 2020. We have been very fortunate to have received support from Teignbrige District Council with various grants and we have also

managed to agreed a 20K plus claim with the Environment Agency for all the disruption caused by the flood works in 2018 which is a great help to the club.

So there we are, that's a quick look back at some of the highlights of 2020 , a year many of us will want to forget. With last year kicked into touch, we can now focus on 2021 and hopefully get some sort of normality back in our lives before to long.



Happy and healthy New Year to all members!

Due to the ongoing pandemic and restrictions we find ourselves under, we'll need to keep an open mind on the course dates currently scheduled below. I'm hoping that by the next update in February, I will have a clearer idea of how we can proceed safely and advise accordingly.

In the meantime, please contact me to register your interest in any of the courses or for further information.

I'm just finalising the RYA Powerboat Level 2 schedule for the 2021 season, which will commence in April. All being well, we will all be in a much better position by then. I will publish the schedule in the February update - if you would like to be first on the list to receive the dates, please drop me an email or contact me, to register your interest.

**RYA Essential Navigation and Seamanship** - Saturday 27th & Sunday 28th February 2021

**RYA Diesel Engine Maintenance** - Sunday 7th March 2021

**RYA First Aid** - Saturday 13th March 2021

**RYA SRC (VHF) Marine Radio** - Saturday 20th March 2021 & \* Sunday 21st March 2021

(\*Note Extra Course Date)

The following courses are not currently scheduled, but could be organised if there is enough demand from members and if it is safe and practical to run them. PB1 and ICC for sail are not available due to the C-19 measures at the moment, but please register your interest in order to be at the top of the list when we are able to run them:

**Is it on your radar?** We are looking to further increase our course offering to members, by running the RYA Radar course at the club. In order to gauge interest, if you are keen to take this course or would like further information on it, please let me know.

### **Practical Sailing Courses**

If you would be interested in taking a practical sailing course at the club, please contact me to register your interest. There is no obligation at this stage, it is purely to gauge demand and viability. Potential courses that could be run are: RYA Basic Skills, RYA Start Sailing, RYA Day Skipper or RYA Coastal Skipper/Yachtmaster Offshore.

**ICC for Sail.** As you may remember, last year SFCC became a registered ICC (International Certificate of Competence) test centre. We are able to offer any members who would wish to qualify for this, to take the test on their own boat with our Yachtmaster Instructor. Further information on the ICC for sail is available on the RYA website, or if you would like to arrange taking test from the club, please contact me.

**Sea Survival.** If we can gather six members who would like to gain the RYA Sea Survival certificate, I hope to be able to secure a group discount at one of our local training centres who offer this invaluable one day course. Please let me know if this is of interest to you.

If you have any questions at all or wish to book a place on any of the above courses, please either catch me around the club, email at [training@starcross-fcc.com](mailto:training@starcross-fcc.com) or call 07792 885 161.

Very best wishes for now, the new year and the 2021 season.

***Dan Tucker - Training Coordinator RYA Centre Principal & Chief Instructor  
training@starcross-fcc.com***



### **Finally**

October marked the clubs 61<sup>st</sup> birthday, a lot has happened over those sixty odd years, and we've come through some up's and down's along the way. It has been a very hard year for us all and in true SFCC tradition we have received fabulous support from the membership and my fellow officers and committee have done a great job in these unprecedented times. The club has fantastic inner strength which is shining through once again and helping us to get through Covid.

There is no provision in the Constitution for postponing the AGM, but I think it is very unlikely that we will be able to hold it with the present restrictions in place. We will review the situation towards the end of January and I will keep you all updated on what is going to happen.

We will shortly start to plan this years Fishing Competitions and Cruises so lets keep our fingers crossed that there won't be to many restrictions by the time we get afloat.

As far as we can tell we have eradicated the email gremlins we have been plagued with when sending out this news letter. You may find over the next couple of months a 'Read Receipt' attached to any emails from the club. It would be a great help if you can ping it back to us as it will give us a good indication of any continued problem.

Hopefully by the time the next Update is published, vaccinations will be well underway and we may be seeing some light at the end of this very long tunnel.

Thank you everyone for your continued support, stay safe and Happy New Year!



***Peter Harris – Commodore  
Commodore.sfcc@gmail.com***