

Tideline

News and information for Wivenhoe Sailing Club
September 2026



Debra Colkett on the maiden voyage of her kayak
Photo by Trudy Dunlop

What A Summer!

There has been so much going on at the club lately! This edition is packed with stories and pictures of everything you have all been up to. A few people have been away, and things have been very busy, so this newsletter is a little later than usual. However, I really wanted to wait so we could fit everything in.

Many thanks to Trudy for sharing the photograph of Debra (fondly known as Dolly) on the maiden voyage of her kayak on a beautiful August evening. You can read a lovely article from Debra inside this edition.

We also have tributes for two of our members, Tim Denham and Albert Scott, who are sadly missed but fondly remembered.

For many years, Tim hosted our Winter Nature Walk followed by a hot lunch in February. We always loved seeing how many birds we could spot, and you can still find those records in previous editions of Mainsheet on our website.

Albert was always so supportive of the 'Old Time Musical' nights we used to host. He was a natural performer, and I could never get him off the stage—he always had 'just one more joke!'

Quick Reminder

If you have plans for a clubhouse event or training, particularly on a weekend, please email me or Phil before advertising to your groups so that we can put it on the website calendar, promote it if necessary, and double-check it's not clashing with anything else happening in the clubhouse.

Members Hiring the Sailing Club

I have just taken over the bookings side of the Sailing Club from Carol Moore, who has been doing an excellent job for several years alongside Bill Wilson. Carol has stepped down from this role and I would like to extend thanks to her and Bill on behalf of the sailing club. Bill is still helping me out but I'm hoping that I can ease his burden soon without messing anything up.

So if you have a family gathering or party coming up and think that the sailing club would be a good venue, then please get in touch with me. All booking conditions and prices are on the web pages (with or without the bar). I will also put you in touch with our Bar Manager, Joanna, who can discuss your event requirements and bar staffing.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this edition; apologies for my nagging - I've tried to be gentle. The next one is due in early December, so the cut-off is the end of November for copy.

So, in no particular order, I give you this second edition of Tideline!

Nikki Robinson - Joint Rear Commodore
rearcommodorewsc@gmail.com

Commodore's Corner



It is a little over 4 months since I took on the role of Commodore and I have been looking back on a summer of so much activity at our wonderful club.

From Open Day to Wivenhoe Regatta, social sails, dinghy racing and cruising in company on the water and lunches, musical evenings and social gatherings ashore it has certainly been a busy summer.

None of this happens without the hard work that is put in by so many of our members.

Whether it be teaching young ones and adults to sail, running the bar, moving boats, keeping the whole club clean and tidy, members take on roles and get things done, often unsung.

I want to pay tribute to all those involved in whatever they do to make this such a fun club and to urge others to join in.

A great big thank you!

Peter Goldsmith, WSC Commodore

Dinghy Sailing

Since the last edition of Tideline, the dinghy sailors have been very active at WSC, with races, social sails, cadet sessions and two Long Distance Social Sails.

In May, the 'May Mug' and 'Sykes' (WOD) series started. Each series is of 5 races with sailors competing for two of the most prestigious trophies in the sailing club. Each race saw up to 12 boats on the water (over 20 boats took part in the full series), with close racing across the classes demonstrated by both series having 3 race winners and the WOD series being settled on results countback.

As the summer solstice gets closer it becomes time for the local regattas. Rowhedge Regatta was first this year on 20 June 2026, and again WSC gave a good showing with 9 WODs racing from WSC to complete a course and then back up past WSC and Wivenhoe all the way to Rowhedge for the finish.

Peter Taylor in '*Dorothy*' demonstrated again that he's a bit of a regatta specialist, taking the win, closely followed by John Carter, '*Capriol*', and Rob Maloney, '*Elise*'.

We also had 5 dinghies in the General Handicap race, with Adrian Green in his Laser '*Nonamee*' taking a close win over Steve Nesbitt in his Solo – '*Thunder*', with Jenny Gifford and her crew Trudy in her Scorpion '*Hung Over*' taking third place. After the race, many boats landed at Rowhedge to mingle with the Regatta crowd and enjoy a drink or two from the Albion on the quay.



WSC Members being ferried to Rowhedge Regatta.
Photo by Nikki Robinson

A few weeks later, on 4 July 2026, Wivenhoe Regatta came around, with the gusty westerly wind made trickier by shifting back and forth around the buildings.

The general handicap fleet of eight boats set off first on a fast run through the barrier, with Chris Wood taking the first-across-the-start-line honours. The fleet

stayed close, with plenty of positions changing before the long beat back up the river to the finish, made more interesting by the presence of several large smacks on the river – including one broadside across the downstream side of the barrier.



Lawrie Gordon, ably crewed by Rob Gordon, took the win in one of the club's RS Visions – a popular result amongst all of the sailors – well done Lawrie! Julie-Anne and Nick White finished second in the club's Laser 2000 with Matt Chilvers taking third in his Finn '*Maid of Wyvern*'.

Lawrie Gordon receiving Wivenhoe Town Regatta Trophy with his Dad and crew Rob. Photo by Julie-Anne White

The WOD start followed with Nigel Cook in '*Alcyone*', taking first across the start and finish for a clean sweep of trophies. Belinda Crane, '*Brunette*', finished second and Andrea Gibson, third in '*Toucan*'.

At the end of July, we saw the second annual WOD Week regatta, now expanded to eight races over five days, including various downriver starts, short-distance, multi-lap and Long-Distance courses, and, of course, WSC Regatta on the Saturday. We were blessed with amazing weather with sunshine and gentle to moderate breezes every day making for enjoyable sailing and action-packed racing. See the Wivenhoe One Design article below by Peter Taylor.



WOD's '*Toucan*', '*Dorothy*', '*Duet*', ('*Vivian*' behind) and '*Elise*' racing at WOD Week
Photo by Simon Shreeve

A mixed fleet of 9 single-handed and double-handed boats joined us on the Saturday for WSC Dinghy Regatta, racing from the WSC line as far as buoy 16 by Rat Island and back.

Adrian Green won the Daily Mirror Cup in his Laser '*Nonamee*', followed by Julie-Anne White with '*Mary June*', and Rob Gordon rounding out the top three in Wayfarer '*Kaboom*'.

In September we will conclude the Summer Series (WOD Challenge, Laser Cup and Rivals Cup), then race the Scaly Capstan (General Handicap excl. WODs) and Capriol Capstan (WODs), and the Ebb Tide Race and Rat Race round Rat Island in October, before finishing the traditional sailing season with the Glozier Laying Up Race on 8th November. All race dates and times are in the club's online sailing calendar, along with the autumn social sails.

Dave Souch, HSS, WivenhoeSailingSecretary@gmail.com

Wivenhoe One Designs – WODs

Following the success of last year's inaugural "90th Anniversary" WOD Week, the fleet decided to run the event again between 28th July and 2nd August. The idea was to arrange close competitive racing using the wider waters of the Colne below Alresford Creek. Wednesday started early with a briefing by Officer of the Day (week), Nic Cross, and a tricky sail against wind and tide to the start area.

The format allowed for two races on Wednesday and Dorothy managed to get a good start in Race One, leading from start to finish in what was probably the WOD equivalent of a sprint race. Alcyone managed to break away from the rest of the fleet for second and Toucan slipped into third.

The second race was over a significantly longer course with a very demanding beat against the flood tide to buoy 16. The smart money was on sticking close to the Brightlingsea shore and Elise showed everyone the way, getting to the outer mark ahead of Dorothy and Ranger. Ranger was going especially well on her first day out this year and with a new crew. The leading three boats ran line abreast back upriver and, with the tide on the turn, it was a gamble whether to head inshore or stay in the channel. Elise and Ranger went for the shore and Dorothy stayed in the middle. With the tide on the turn, Nic decided to shorten course, and on the final run in, a slight wind shift and an extra puff of breeze were enough to push Dorothy through to win ahead of Ranger and Elise.

Day 2 arrived, and whoever booked the weather must deserve a trophy all to themselves. Beautiful sunshine, a perfect sailing breeze, and temperatures that remind you of Mediterranean beach holidays. Race one started slightly off plan as the sea breeze filled in just before the start, changing the expected windward dive for the first buoy into a mass downwind charge. All eight boats got through unscathed and the race developed with boats cross tacking and places changing. Unnoticed, Alcyone slipped away into the lead and didn't look back. Dorothy finally broke out of the pack to take second and Toucan, sporting a rather jaunty, brand new, day-glo pink spinnaker, filled the third spot.

After a short break, Race 4 started with a proper windward start and this time Dorothy managed to slip out in front with Alcyone hot on her heels. The two were side by side running down to the leeward mark at the end of lap one. There was a "brief discussion" between helms about how the course was to be interpreted, the outcome of which saw Dorothy just manage to slip around the buoy, leaving Alcyone

in no man's land. Dorothy went on to lead the fleet around the three-lap course. Alcyone rose to the bait and sailed back through the fleet to pick up an excellent second, with Peewit picking up a highly creditable third.

One of the joys of one-design sailing is that, "in theory," all the boats are equal. With a fleet of boats that are 90 years old, it is really something remarkable that they have been preserved. Races are won and lost on the smallest of errors or spotted wind shifts. As the fleet has grown again recently, the standard of sailing has grown, and it is great to be part of such good-natured but competitive racing.

Day 3 was allocated as the "Long Race", starting from Alresford, downriver to the Pyefleet racing mark just off East Mersea, and back to finish at the Alresford line. With a more variable wind, the race officer managed to get the fleet away with a short beat upriver before turning for the long run to Pyefleet. Peewit was just over the line at the start, having to return and restart at the back.

Although frustrating at times, having a long spinnaker run keeps the fleet together, and at the Pyefleet buoy everyone was still in contention. The turn back upriver should then have become a long windward leg, but the variable wind became completely confused before filling from roughly the opposite direction. Positions changed constantly, but Alcyone kept up her good run and pulled away enough to take first place ahead of Elise. The next three boats crossed the finish only seconds apart, with Toucan just pipping Dorothy and Ranger.

So, Day 5, Saturday, dawned with excitement as racing was to be combined with the annual Wivenhoe Sailing Club regatta. Dorothy was not able to race due to other commitments, but seven WODs lined up to start at the Sailing Club line. With the fleet ready to go, a "deafening" silence marked the start time. Confused looks all around, but eventually the collective mind decided to go. It turned out that the string on the hooter had pulled off and no backup was available. Normal business returned as a fluky breeze developed into a steady sea breeze. As the fleet headed back toward the finish, Elise was leading Alcyone by the narrowest of margins with Vivian in third. However, at the last buoy of the course, Elise sailed the wrong side, having to sail back and re-round. Alcyone won with Vivian sailing through into second and Elise holding on for third.

The final day brought perfect sailing weather for the scheduled two races. The wind direction, however, meant lots of reaching but not much windward work. Dorothy now needed two straight wins to get first overall, with Alcyone in the driving seat for the honours. The two raced hard and fair, and very close, but in the end Alcyone had just too much pace and recorded two wins, albeit the last race by no more than three seconds, thus sealing the overall prize as well as the Ray Hall Trophy for the long

race. Dorothy was second overall and also won the Zak Brightmore Trophy for the best results in the six short-race series. Toucan won the award for best female helm.

Also racing were George and David in Duet, out for the first time this season.

Many thanks must go to everyone who supported the week, from the Race Officer and various crew members to the safety boat crews and all of the onshore helpers, caterers, and bar providers.

The crews are already looking forward to 2027 when, hopefully, a few more boats will be able to take part.

Please note dates for WOD Week next year: Wednesday 18 August to Sunday 22 August 2027

Peter Taylor, WOD No9 Dorothy

Pictures from the WOD Week & Prize Giving

Weds 29 July to Sun 2 August 2026

Prize Giving Photographs courtesy of Julie-Anne White





WOD Week 26

Entries: 13 Races Sailed: 6 Discard: 1

Series Place	Sail No	Boat	Type of Boat	Owner	Series Points	WOD Week 1, Course D	WOD Week 2, Course H	WOD Week 3, Course J	WOD Week 4, Course E	WOD Week 5, Ray Hall Trophy, Course A	WOD Week 6, Regatta Race, Course 8
1	1	Alcyone	WOD	Nigel C	7	2	4	1	2	1	1
2	9	Dorothy	WOD	Peter T	9	1	1	2	1	4	DNC10
3	13	Toucan	WOD	Andrea G	18	3	5	3	4	3	DNC10
4	17	Elise	WOD	Rob M	19	6	3	6	5	2	3
5	4	Vivian	WOD	Colin B	25	4	6	8	7	6	2
6	3	Ranger	WOD	David C	26	5	2	7	NSC9	5	7
7	2	Duet	WOD	George	30	7	7	4	6	7	6
8	7	Peewit	WOD	Danielle	31	DNC10	DNC10	5	3	8	5
9	10	Brunette	WOD	Belinda	44	DNC10	DNC10	DNC10	DNC10	DNC10	4



Photo by Steven Crane



Photo by Steven Crane



Photo by Steven Crane



Photo by Steven Crane



Photo by Steven Crane



Photo by Steven Crane



Photo by Steven Crane



Photo by Rob Maloney

WOD Week 6, Regatta Race, Course 8

Start: Sat 1 Aug 26 13:15:00

Points	Sail No	Boat	Owner	Finishing Place	Comments	Points
1	1	Alcyone	Nigel C	1	with Claire	1
2	4	Vivian	Colin B	2	Helm Dave S, crew Colin	2
3	17	Elise	Rob M	3	with Alan	3
4	10	Brunette	Belinda	4	with Andrea	4
5	7	Peewit	Danielle	5	with Trevor S	5
6	2	Duet	George	6	with David T	6
7	3	Ranger	David C	7	with Alan P	7

Wivenhoe and Rowhedge Cruising Association

The river Colne is home to several boating organisations, one of which is the Wivenhoe and Rowhedge Cruising Association (WRCA), formally known as the Wivenhoe and Rowhedge Yacht Owners Association (WRYOA), famed for its Gooseberry Pie Rally held each year. The Association was formed in 1967 by a group of people looking to establish a boating association that was focused on sailing but not on competing.

The first two group members were Don Goodsell, an engineering journalist and John Leather, the author of Gaff Rig. The first meeting about forming the Association was held at John's family home. It was decided the organisation would not be a Club and its name would not include sailing, and it would not have a Commodore. Its name became the Wivenhoe and Rowhedge Yacht Owners Association, and was to represent those who enjoying cruising a non-commercial vessel for neither sport or competition.

Other early members soon joined in the forming of the association including John Carter and Peter Mather, the Association's first secretary. Peter Brookes, owner of a converted Scottish fishing vessel Golden Sheaf, and location of many early Association meetings, and George Hicks, an MOD scientist.

The inaugural meeting was held in a room at the back of the Black Buoy. A heated meeting was held as there was strong opposition to the idea from a group attending from WSC. The meeting concluded with the forming of the Association and Don reflected that the meeting was, "a little more turbulent than I had expected". The Association had "crossed the bar and its turbulent waters, and was now underway."

The Association is famous for its annual dinner, traditionally held on the first Saturday of December. The idea of the dinner was established within months of the Association's formation but where could one hold a dinner for around 30 people. The local pubs in those days did not serve evening meals. By this time Lewis Worsp, owner of the 11 ton cutter, Maid of Wyvern had become interested in the Association. Lewis, and his son John, then a teenager, were to play important roles in the development of the Association. Lewis was a trustee of the Nottage Institute and offered the upper deck as a location for the annual dinner, a tradition was born, with a first price of 10/6.

One of the great traditions of the Association is the Gooseberry Pie Rally, in recent years held on Packing Shed Island, after the one and only Association 'race'! The tradition of the Gooseberry Pie Rally goes back to Essex smacks end of fishing season celebration race, which coincided with the gooseberry picking season so the obvious choice for the celebrations after the race was of course, gooseberry pies!



Tollesbury Sailing Club Original Gooseberry Pie Dish

After 59 years and many local cruises around the Colne, the Crouch, the Blackwater, “Up the Wallet” into the Walton backwaters and the Orwell; several long distance cruises by members such as Liz and Mike Taylor-Jones and John and Jackie Worsp, the Association is as strong as when it first “crossed the bar”. A name change to the Wivenhoe and Rowhedge Cruising Association in 2023, a current membership of around 140 with a very keen and active committee, provides the basis for a very active association. As always those with an interest in cruising can find a welcoming home in the WRCA.

Anthony Vickers, Chairman
wrcachair@gmail.com

WSC Cadet Section

Cadet Camp – June 2026

We had great fun at Cadet camp this year – despite some challenging weather conditions. The cadets set off on the Friday from the Club and sailed to Mersea. The boats are pulled up onto the stoney beach and the safety boats are anchored off-shore. Some boats are harder to lift high enough over the tide line than others!



Once all the boats were safely away for the night, with sails rolled everything secured, the Cadets walked the 10 mins to the camp site. We had lots of help this year putting up tents which was brilliant.

We then all ate supper (spaghetti bolognaise) and had various cakes for pudding (kindly supplied by parents). The Cadets had great fun playing ball games whilst we drank tea in Caleb's camper van!

On Saturday the weather wasn't great, very windy and raining on and off. We knew on Friday that we wouldn't be able to sail in the morning so some cadets played card games etc in the barn and some ran the Mersea Parkrun!

In the afternoon the wind was still a concern so Rob and Matt made the call to take the cadets on the safety boats along the coast rather than try and row or sail. The cadets loved that trip! In the evening we managed to have a BBQ, often with the help of an umbrella, and luckily we could eat in the barn.



On Sunday morning the Cadets set about tidying up the camp site and then we all had bacon and sausages.

Once all the tents were down and the camp clear, the cadets walked to the boats. The weather had dropped enough to sail home – but the journey was still pretty swift in the wind!



Camp is different each year because of the weather and the people but it is always fun!

Thank you to all the Cadets who made the weekend such fun, and thank you to all the volunteers who gave up their time. And thank you to the parents for lending us your children and for providing salads, cakes and snacks!

Emily Gordon, WSC Cadets

The Joy of Kayaking



How DO you get to know a river? Swim in it? Sail on it? Cruise on it?

But not JUST know it, understand it. Its tides and shallows; its winding curves and contours and the confluence of a perfect meeting place. The magic of how to explore it's wiley and at times, gusty, windy ways.

I have been lucky enough to cruise on it, had some exciting sails and even had a dip (not exactly voluntarily you understand). I decided I needed my own vessel, where I can explore, to discover and adventure on.

I found Persy (short for Persephone) in Wivenhoe, and on a perfect, still sunset evening, Persy and I set sail (in a manner of speaking).



In the few moments I paddled out from the hard, the tranquillity of the evening light, the intimacy of being alone with the river and the kayak, and observing the waning, glorious summer all hit me. I at once felt the peace and the breath and depth of this historic water, the stories it contained carried along with its deep mysteries, forever changing.

I stopped paddling and absorbed the possibilities of getting to know not only the river, but also unknown aspects of myself not yet revealed to me.

I would like to thank WSC members for their enthusiasm and encouragement to follow your bliss on the water, whatever that may look like.

Debra (Dolly) Colkett, WSC member

Tim Denham

By Gill Maloney



Any frequent users of the river Colne have probably noticed the unique little varnished wooden cruiser ‘Dipper’ that sits on one of the lower moorings on the trot of moorings below the old Priors Sandworks.

Dipper was loved, cherished and sailed for 50 years by my late partner Tim Denham.

I feel very lucky that I too was able to share the last 20 years of a wonderful life aboard that very special little boat.

We spent this time cruising the rivers and creeks of Essex and Suffolk, enjoying invigorating beats up and down the coast in wild weather, as well as gorgeous spinnaker runs on hot sunny days.

Dipper was annually launched last week in May. All organised and managed by Tim from the Sailing Club Old Hard, with the help of one or two trusty friends - Tim was fiercely independent and never liked to bother anyone to do something he could manage himself.

Some summers if the weather allowed we would manage to spend upwards of 100 nights in total aboard. October marked the end of the sailing season and always came around too soon for Tim, when it was time to haul out.

Dipper was kept in warm, dry luxury during the winter months in Tim’s workshop where she could be careened and cared for as befitting the venerable old lady she became (built in 1963).

Every 10 years varnish would be completely stripped back to reveal bare wood and 12 smooth coats of varnish re-applied, each one dutifully and lovingly sanded down before application of the next coat, a true labour of love.

Tim used to laugh when I once described being aboard Dipper as ‘a bit like sailing in

granny's best sideboard'. The interior also built of Honduras mahogany was all equally lovingly cared for.

When he first purchased Dipper, Tim spent long hours increasing the cabin size by lengthening the coach roof and making the bunks wider, longer and deeper. He also built a very serviceable and comfortable galley area with foldout worksurface which doubled as a chart table. It was always one of the simple pleasures of life, preparing food whilst anchored in a creek listening to the sounds of nature and the bird life.



Tim was a skilled sailor and knew his local waters inside out, he had an instinct for sailing stemming from a lifetime of 80 years spent on and around his beloved river Colne.

Tim also had a trusty Tepco dinghy which was our tender and went everywhere with us even though it slowed down our sailing. He made a Gunter sailing rig for the dinghy and cut a case for a centreboard. We were then able to sail even further up the rivers and creeks we anchored in.

We set ourselves a bit of a challenge and managed to sail or row as far as navigable to the upper reaches of most of the rivers and creeks of Essex and Suffolk, often pushing through reeds, sculling, prodding or punting along with an oar and even dragging the dinghy through the muddy shallows on the occasion of trying to get all the way around Potten Island.

We kept a log/diary for all the years I sailed with Tim - well it was mostly me, and I used to enjoy filling it with illustrations of the birds and animal life around and views of the rivers and Marsh.

Alongside sailing which we both adored we had a lifelong fascination of bird life and spent many a happy hour watching the comings and going is especially at low water when waders would come in very close to us. We enjoyed many encounters with seals having two or three times having to physically tip them out of the dinghy in the

morning when they had decided that it was a great overnight resting place!

We also had one young seal whilst anchored in Yokesfleet behind Foulness Island which was completely fascinated with the drogue that we had put out astern during a windy night, and it spent a couple of hours just swimming round and pushing its little head into the opening, seemingly just for the fun of it.

When Tim wasn't sailing, birdwatching or working on his boat he was happily engrossed in the joys of painting or modelmaking. His observations of wildflowers and avian life are stunning, as are his nautical paintings which are captured in a way that only a sailor can do, showing a real understanding of the weather on the sea and the way in which a boat moves through water under sail.

Tim built both full and half-model boats, each exquisitely constructed from scratch from scale plans.

Every minuscule piece painstakingly cut and crafted by hand. Even down to creating a laid and caulked plank deck which you can see on the last model he ever made of the Fife yacht Lulworth.

This was his final masterpiece and I have donated this to the Nottage Maritime Institute as a tribute and reminder of a very modest, but special and talented Wivenhoe man.

Dipper is a North East Coast One Design, designed by Alan Buchanan and built in Whitby for the South Shields Yacht Club. A proper North Sea boat, they had a small racing fleet at one time.

Only 11 were ever built and we know of only one other existing which was in a very sorry state.



Happily, Dipper continues her life on the Colne in the safe hands of my son Rob, and I have been lucky enough to spend a couple of days aboard this summer.

Gill Maloney

Albert Scott

22/9/1933 – 23/07/2026



I first met Albert 30 years ago when we both did our RYA Day Skipper course in Loughton Essex. It didn't take long to establish we had a lot in common, apart from the obvious fascination with boats, we discovered we both lived in the same village of Chigwell Row, both had excellent taste in partners, Albert with the lovely Kath and me with Glyn.

In addition, we were both connoisseurs of good cheap wine and beers! Needless to say, all 4 of us spent many evenings over the years sampling and comparing notes on said beverages! Which we continued to do after following them to Wivenhoe to live.

When we first met, Albert had not long retired from the fish trade. He had owned a successful fishmonger shop in Finchley. Before that he had worked for various supermarkets running their fish departments. There wasn't much he didn't know about fish and how to prepare it! He always intended to show me how to prepare skate and fillet fish but regrettably we never got around to it – sailing and socialising always took preference.

Albert had extensive experience skippering and maintaining boats, having spent a lot of time in his younger years in Ramsgate maintaining and delivering various motor boats around the coast, to Europe and even the Mediterranean. It was when he retired that he bought a yacht at the London Boat Show. Jaguar Yachts had ceased trading and sold the moulds to a Norfolk boatyard, which made the renamed White Silk, a 28 ft bilge keeler. I'm really not sure where he learnt to sail, but it wouldn't surprise me if he taught himself by trial and error on the Norfolk Broads! He kept the boat there for a year as part of the purchase deal. His son Trevor told me the other day that they often went aground! Great training for the East Coast!

The end of his free year mooring in the Broads coincided with the end of our Day Skipper course, so I was asked to help bring 'Goodtimin' down from Lowestoft to Tollesbury, where it was kept for the rest of his ownership. It was a memorable trip, as, soon after we left in the early hours, a thick fog descended! This was pre-GPS days and, as Albert was busy skippering and looking out, I was designated navigator! I must have learnt something on the course, as after 3 hours the fog lifted and, miraculously, we were exactly where we were supposed to be between two yellow buoys! I don't think I could do it again! Albert must have been impressed, as I was asked to sail many times again with him.

Albert & Kath cruised quite extensively in Goodtimin and took her over to Holland a few times. Kath was not keen on the North Sea crossing, so on two occasions I was asked to accompany Albert to Ostend while Kath went by train. As it happened, both times the North Sea was kind to us; in fact, on the first crossing there was no wind at all, and we motored most of the way, towing a friend and his wife in their Colvic Sailor, as their water pump had disintegrated! Towing across the Traffic Separation Zone was an experience neither of us would forget!

Albert recounted to me a return journey he did on his own overnight! It was a very rough crossing, and he was heavily reefed. Halfway over, he realised that there was water sloshing around in the cabin! He found out later the stemhead fitting had come loose, and water was coming in every time a wave came over the bow! A narrow escape for the mast and him! That's one occasion I was glad I was not crew!

Another 'hairy' North Sea crossing was when the couple we had previously towed over bought a Dutch barge in Holland and asked Kath and Albert to join them on the journey back. Unbeknown to them, the previous owner had removed all or most of the ballast from the boat and, halfway over, when it got rough, the boat was rolling so much that Albert said the heavy oak table in the wheelhouse was smashing from side to side so violently he thought it was going to demolish the saloon behind!

Many will remember Albert as being the showman! He loved to perform and did not take any persuading when asked to do a 'turn' at the club's Old Time Music events. His impersonation of Max Miller was brilliant. Nikki Robinson recounted that she had trouble getting him off the stage for the next act! Always up for a laugh, he even dressed in drag one time to sing 'My old man said follow the van'. Unfortunately, I don't have photos, as I was busy laughing too much!

RIP Albert - A great sailor, but an even better friend.

Dave Matthews



Summer Sailing on Ava-Rose

By Belinda Crane



Steven and I have had a wonderful summer on our Mirage 28 'Ava-Rose,' exploring the Blackwater and visiting West Mersea, Tollesbury, Goldhanger, Osea Island, Maldon and St Lawrence. One of our favourite trips was our visit to Maldon.

It was a beautiful, calm, sunny morning as we anchored off Osea Island having sailed from Pyefleet Creek the night before. Surprisingly, it was quiet for a Saturday morning with just one other yacht anchored off the beach.

Steven was keen to participate in the Maldon Park Run, so we set off at 8am with the incoming tide. High tide was at 10am, so this gave us enough water to go up the river into Maldon and use the visitor's pontoon.

We had the tide and a gentle breeze behind us, a clear sky with the sun shining - perfect conditions for our journey. With the incoming tide, we made good time and arrived at 8.30 am surrounded by beautiful barges and traditional boats - two barges were leaving their berths and setting their sails. It was a magnificent sight!



Steven completed the popular park run along the promenade whilst I was happy to sit by the barges absorbing the traditional Maldon atmosphere! We ventured into town for a couple of hours and visited some interesting local shops before stocking up on some supplies for Ava-Rose.

We timed our visit to coincide with the outgoing tide, so we left the pontoon with plenty of water before the creek dried out!

We followed the river past Heybridge Basin (whereas a cadet I remember attending the Gooseberry Pie Rally with my dad!- that was a long time ago!)

The dinghy enabled us to follow the coastline along Heybridge towards Goldhanger where patches of beautiful beach could be found. The water was clear, calm and very inviting, so we had an impromptu swim which was glorious! It reminded me of the Mediterranean! We dried off in the sun heading back to Ava-Rose traversing just off the beaches off Osea.



A couple of idyllic spots invited further swims before rejoining Ava-Rose. Once aboard, it was time for delicious seafood platters followed by a relaxing and contented afternoon in a tranquil and almost tropical environment watching the world go by! Paradise!

Belinda & Steven Crane



Alresford Creek Boat Owners – ACBOC

Alresford Creek 50th Anniversary Rally

What were you doing in 1976?

Alresford creek was once a commercial waterway with barges loading gravel and sand from the overhead cableway. The mouth of the creek was spanned by a swing bridge over which ran the railway from Wivenhoe to Brightlingsea. The supports are still clearly visible on each side of the creek mouth as are the remains of the bridge keeper's boat house.

With the demise of the barging trade and the railway, the creek started a new chapter. Leisure vessels established moorings and the numbers started to increase to unmanageable levels. On the 1st of May 1976 a group of boat owners formed the Alresford Creek Boat Owners Association, with a view to regulating and protecting the creek from over exploitation.

In 2018 the association merged with the Alresford Boat Owners Cooperative, which was formed to purchase the sheds that were previously leased to association members, for storage and maintenance of boats.

2026 marks the 50th anniversary of the Alresford Creek Boat Owners Association, even the weather is trying to imitate the glorious summer of '76. In celebration of the event members gathered on the weekend of the 21st and 22nd of August for a series of locally based land and water events.

The 50th Anniversary Colne Rally was designed to encourage those getting into sailing to come out and sail on the Colne and enjoy the company of fellow members.

In typical ACBOC fashion, the event started unconventionally, why not have a swim before one leaves the mooring. Bread knife in hand, Rising Dawn was released from its mooring buoy to head downstream.

A gentle sail followed before meeting up with Ava Rose, Sundance and Swedish Lass already gathered in Pyefleet.

Saturday was a relaxed day, even the seals decided to sleep on the float.





We made the most of the fine but gusty conditions with a run out to Colne bar and up the Blackwater towards Bradwell.

The wind increased to 24knots just after Bench Head resulting in a spirited sail, tight on the wind, before dropping down to 5 knots at Bradwell.

No surprises, on the return the wind had shifted, tight on the wind on the way back too.

The fleet returned to moor up in Brightlingsea around 5pm.

The harbour put us all on the fisherman's pontoon together with Bolinda. Crews gathered on Swedish Lass for pre-dinner drinks before getting the water taxi to shore. A fine meal was enjoyed by all at the Yachtsman's Arms before getting the final water taxi back to the boats.



On Sunday, we were joined by Proteus, the harbour was like a millpond. Optimism abounded however; the wind WILL fill in.

Crews gathered for a substantial breakfast in the Victoria Café which was to be followed by more sailing in company. The original plan was a raft up somewhere for lunch. However, all agreed that the breakfast was enough to last, possibly until Monday!

On leaving the pontoon there was time for more sailing in the Blackwater before

returning to home moorings. A fine beat out of the Colne in the freshening breeze, later reaching up the Blackwater and back. The fleet finally went their own way after a most enjoyable and fitting way to celebrate 50 years of Alresford Creek Boat owners.

What about the next 50?

First and foremost, members benefit from our aim: “To provide affordable storage, moorings other facilities and services for boat owners in the local area.” There is also a wealth of experience and willingness to share knowledge and time in true cooperative spirit.

We recognise the creek as a special place, not just for ourselves but for all who visit. We work to ensure that it remains so. There are many challenges to the environment we live in and by maintaining our presence we have a caring oversight which is so important to the future of the creek.

We also strongly believe in the “Kindred Clubs” ethos, all our events are open to WSC & WRCA members, in fact many of our members are also members of other clubs. We are grateful for the support of WSC, allowing us to meet in the clubhouse on the first Monday of the month.

Perhaps you would like to join us there or at one of our events. You will be most welcome. Details can be found on our website, Www.acbo.org.uk.

Grahame Hill

Wivenhoe Corsairs

Rowing • Wivenhoe, Essex

‘The Gig with the Rig’



At the height of the May heat wave - Defiance found herself in new and exciting territory as she was accepted to join the 'East Coast Gaffers Swallows and Amazon' weekend - held annually in and around the Walton Backwaters. To make sure she looked the part, Defiance was sporting a sprit rig in addition to her four sturdy Collars oars. Acquired a few years ago with the goal of adding sail to oar (especially for longer adventure rows), we had been waiting for a ‘proving ground’ when the Swallows & Amazons came along.



Having had our entry accepted, a qualified group of our Corsairs that included sailors, a boatbuilder and even a traditional rigger, set about to see what might be possible. Before long a mast base was fashioned, plus a clamp for the thwart and three supporting stays spliced to the mast. But could ‘Defiance’ sail? We set about finding out with three eager crews signed up for Swallows & Amazons, and boy were we



surprised! Weighing no more than an oar, everything (mast, sprit and sail) was deployable (or removable) in a matter of seconds thanks to the addition of a brail line and removable stays. Our existing thole pins doubled up as belay pins for controlling the sheet.

Off the wind, and even on a close reach 'Defiance' glided along just fine under sail alone, with a surprisingly balanced helm – carrying us to seal-filled creeks on Day 1 and across the Wade as part of circumnavigation of Horsey Island on Day 2. When faced with an inevitable headwind, we simply dropped the rig to reduce windage and jumped back on the oars. On the final day, the wind was up and, despite an incoming tide, we saw over 5 knots over the ground as we reached down the Twizzle in the company of others.

Verdict? A fabulous Swallows & Amazons and a resounding success for 'the gig with a rig'. Some of the Corsairs were sailing for the first time and talk of tweaks and improvements have already begun. So watch out for the Gig with the Rig on the Colne as we continue to experiment with what our beautiful gigs have to offer.



Wivenhoe Corsairs Community Rowing Club

WSC OPEN DAY

Saturday 15 August 2026

The Open Day is an important date in the WSC calendar when we invite visitors from the local community to see what the club is about and get on the water. It helps show that we're a friendly and inclusive part of the community and not some stuffy old institution.

This year's Open Day was another success with club members working together we welcomed over 50 visitors to the club with dinghy sailing in three Wayfarers and one Wivenhoe One Design, Rowing in Defiance, and three cruisers providing trips down the river, plus Viking, reliable as ever, giving shorter river trips.

Feedback from the visitors was all positive, with some making multiple trips out, (one intrepid visitor managed two dinghy sails, a row, and a ride on board a cruiser), with several coming back to the club since to find out more or join up.

Alongside the water-based activities, we also had a couple of stalls on the club patio, including Wivenhoe Rivercare explaining their efforts to keep the Colne clean by litter picking, and showing some of the trash they have recovered over the years. Finally, of course, the ever-popular cakes and refreshments coming out of the club galley.

Comments from a couple of our volunteers on the day

From Sam Jess:

I had a chat with an old boy called John who came with his wife, he was fascinating. He worked on the ship building in Wivenhoe back in the day and had so much local knowledge. They both just had tea and cakes and soaked up the atmosphere rather than sail, but I think they really enjoyed it. It was definitely my highlight of the day, hearing all that living local history. I was very honoured and gave him a piece of chocolate cake - on the house!

From Debra Colkett:

I received the following from a visitor called Kudsai after the Open Day who is now a new member.

"Hey dolly. It was pleasure meeting you today and thank you for the warm welcome. My first sailing experience was wonderful".

Thank you to everybody who came along and volunteered on the day, those who brought their boats for visitors trips, or helmed club boats. The Wivenhoe Corsairs members who brought Defiance down and took visitors out for try rows, those who manned the safety boats to keep everybody safe, and of course those on dry side booking visitors in, making sure they were appropriately equipped with buoyancy aids, and the galley team keeping everybody refreshed and full of cake.

Dave Souch (HSS), and Nikki Robinson (Joint R-C)

WSC Open Day 2026

Photographs courtesy of Dave Souch



WivGigs Rowing Club

Inclusive Gig Rowing In Wivenhoe

Every year we take part in the Great River Race which takes place in London, starting at Millwall on the Thames.

Each gig has a crew of six this is because the event rules state that, as well as the crew, each boat must have a passenger. This is to represent the important role rowing boats have historically for moving people and goods around London via the Thames. A grim reminder as we row past Traitors Gate!

The course is 21.6 miles from Millwall to Ham House just past Richmond. It is a fantastic experience rowing under all the famous bridges and passing iconic landmarks.

Note from Nikki: As I finish this article I can see that the WivGigs are prepping for this race via Facebook. Follow them on Facebook to see how they did - Good luck to everyone involved!

https://www.facebook.com/Wivgigs?locale=en_GB

WivGigs Fundraiser at WSC



On the Hard

Beer or Tea at WSC

It's been a wonderful summer at WSC and looking back we've had so many great events on 5 o'Clock Friday's and Super Sundays.

Cheese & Wine Night, Peter & Sue's Roasties, Gin Tasting, Bring Your Own BBQ's (several), WOD 70's Night, Mike's Vinyl Night, The Glowsticks band, beautiful vocals from Karen Emms, Fish & Chips, Shanty Singers....not to mention just simple 5 o'Clock Fridays evening watching the sun go down.



The brilliant Rowhedge
Carousers shanty singers
who entertained us on
Friday 31 July 2026 as part
of WOD week

Picture courtesy of Alison Lowe

Also a big thank you for the fantastic support that we've had from members for Wivenhoe Town Regatta with the outside bar and inside tea and cakes, both of which did extremely well.

The outside bar would not have happened without the loan of beer cooling equipment for the kegs from Dave Souch who organised all of that side of things.

WSC Open day was also a great success and we are happy to welcome new members to the club as well as get many people out on the water. Once again thanks to the galley team for serving refreshments and all of the great cakes donated by our members. Time for a bake off series soon!

Also a really well done to the Wivenhoe Whispers fundraising for Breast Cancer who raised a super amount of money on and around 12 September 2026. Full update in the December edition.

A few pictures below from Wivenhoe Town Regatta



Pictures courtesy of Nikki Robinson and Alison Lowe

House Committee

The House committee meets once a month in order to organise house events and to support the sailing calendar with anything that might be suitable (entertainment, food and beer of course). We are also responsible for the buildings, bar and bookings which is shared among us. We try to get as much on the calendar as possible so that we all know when the club is occupied and so that everyone knows what is happening.

Currently we are made up of the Joint Rear Commodores, Nikki Robinson & Phil Mylrea, Alison Lowe, Ginny O'Dell and would like to give a warm welcome to Samantha Jess and Lizette Saikia who have recently joined us.

WSC Bar & Bar Duty

The 5 o'clock Fridays have paused now until next summer and I think it we can all agree they have been a huge success. Well done to everyone involved not least the many bar staff who stepped up to work the double shifts on a Friday and to Lanza Phil for driving this all summer. Thanks Phil.

Bar times on a Friday have now gone back to 7pm openings with 10pm finish unless there is something happening that requires a later finish or the bar is rammed and the staff don't mind. Standard bar sessions on a Sunday are now 12:30pm to 2:30pm.

If you would like to volunteer or learn how to run the bar then please contact Phil Mylrea (phil.mylrea@gmail.com) who can add you to the rota and set you up with a buddy for training. You can view the bar rota via the link below:

<https://wivenhoesailingclub.org/bar-rota/>

A quick reminder for those working on the bar about the beer and lager in the cold store. Please do not touch any of the taps or mechanisms on the kegs or wall in this area. Joanna, our bar manager, checks that everything is ready to go for the weekend. You do not need to turn anything off at the end of any shift relating to the beers.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Autumn/Winter program is gradually coming together alongside the sailing events for those intrepid sailors keen to sail throughout the winter! Do you have an idea that you'd like to run for members on a Friday evening? Let us know and we'll support you.

Dates for your diary with details to follow very soon:

Sunday 8 November 2026 - Laying Up Lunch 12:30pm (after the Laying Up Race)

This hasn't been done for a while but I'd like to see how this works again and it will be a hot, two course lunch prepared by me (Nikki) and other willing volunteers. If you are up for cooking the required dish or helping on the day, please let me know, all ingredients will be provided.

Saturday 21 November 2026 - Annual Dinner & Prize Giving

A chance to dust off your posh wellies and get dressed for dinner. All details and

ticket prices to follow soon.

Please join us in supporting the **WivGigs fundraiser night next Friday 18 September**, who doesn't love a quiz. Details on the WivGig page above.

Also, a fabulous opportunity to sail on The Pioneer next May, places are limited so contact Lanza Phil to get signed up ASAP to secure your trip.



PIONEER COMES TO WIVENHOE

COME AND JOIN US

★ 15TH / 16TH MAY 27 ★

Pioneer is probably the most recognisable boat on the river. Originally built in 1864 by Harris of Rowhedge as an Oyster Smack, she worked as far afield as the Dutch coast.

Rebuilt to the highest standards, she now offers a truly unique hands-on experience of big smack sailing.

Over the weekend of 15 and 16 May 2027, we are proposing a day sail from Brightlingsea, culminating in a trip up to Wivenhoe, followed by a second day sail returning to Brightlingsea the following day.

Subject to the overnight mooring, Pioneer will be open for members to view on Saturday evening.

THE SAILING

- The cost is **£65** per person, per day, which covers the charter of the boat, professional crew, fuel, tea, coffee and other sailing costs.
- This is a genuine hands-on sailing experience. You will be involved in handling the boat, from taking the massive tiller to sail handling – it takes eight adults just to hoist her mainsail!
- Pioneer can take a maximum of 12 crew, so places will be limited.
- To make this unique opportunity viable, we need members to commit as soon as possible.

SECURE YOUR PLACE

A deposit per person per day is required to secure your place.

 Saturday only	£20
 Sunday only	£20
 Both days	£40

WITH ONLY 12 PLACES AVAILABLE PER DAY THIS REALLY IS AN OPPORTUNITY NOT TO MISS!

PAYMENT INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Contact Lanza Phil as soon as possible to reserve your place. Tell him which day(s) you would like to sail and that you are ready to pay your deposit.
- 2 Pay your deposit directly into the Wivenhoe Sailing Club account.
- 3 Use **YOUR NAME + PIONEER** as the payment reference.
- 4 Once payment is made, let Lanza Phil know you have paid so he can confirm your place.

The remaining balance will be requested nearer the event.

TO RESERVE YOUR PLACE, PLEASE CONTACT LANZA PHIL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

Nikki Robinson & Phil Mylrea, Joint Rear Commodores
rearcommadorewsc@gmail.com/phil.mylrea@gmail.com