



St Helier Boat Owners' Association



Newsletter - 2008

Chairman's Jottings

During the last few months your committee has been quite active, meeting on several occasions with members of Jersey Harbours.

Two concerning issues discussed were the loss of the unloading bays at Elizabeth Marina and the possible flooding of the old harbour to create a marina.

Regarding Elizabeth marina I am pleased to say that, after pressure, we have at least managed to regain six unloading bays beside the Dandara Marketing Suit and two alongside Harbour Reach. However, I am concerned about the small number of boat owners who abuse the conditions stipulated. These are 30-minute stay unloading bays and I endorse any action taken by Jersey Harbours to issue fines for anyone who does not comply.

The long-term issue of unloading bays is still a matter for discussion.

I voiced my concerns in the recently published Harbour News regarding the creation of a marina in the old harbour. I have little doubt there are some boat owners already moored in the old harbour who would welcome the idea. What I can say is none of them have contacted me to say so, but there has been no shortage of current berth holders contacting me stating how much they are against the idea for several very justified reasons. Needless to say I don't believe my views went down well at the 'Pink Palace'.

Following our discussions I am pleased to report that the dilapidated dinghy pontoon at South Pier is to be replaced. Although we were advised this would be done by the end of May, it looks as if it will be delayed by about a month. I would advise anyone with an unmarked dinghy attached to the pontoon to mark it with the name or registration number of their boat, as there is likely to be a purge on unmarked dinghies when the old pontoon is removed.

Security has been an issue of concern for some time, and following a serious incident at the town marina a review is under way to upgrade the currently unacceptable level of security. A fob

system is being introduced for the marinas with Elizabeth Marina being the first to come on line sometime during June.

The new facilities block is fully operational at Elizabeth and is of a very high standard.

A number of issues have been dealt with at La Collette with the security gate being one of them and at long last the dilapidated trolleys have been replaced.

An issue that has given your committee concern is the management of the waiting lists for all classes of moorings and the perception that some owners have been able to jump the queue. We have discussed this with Myra Shacklady, the Commercial Director of Jersey Harbours and it is an issue that your committee will continue to pursue. On the brighter side, Myra is looking at ways of making more fingers available on annual contract in St Helier Marina.

I am certain many of you visited the Jersey Boat Show and I compliment the organisers for what was on display, particularly in view of the short planning time-scale. I did feel that the show lacked exhibitors displaying craft from the cheaper end of the market, but I am sure that this and other ideas for improvement will be taken into account for the future of what has the potential to be a successful annual event.

Scheduling the Boat Show over the Spring bank holiday weekend had the potential to be disruptive to local owners with berths in St Helier marina. I've had no reports of problems, however, I would be pleased to hear from anyone who experienced difficulty or indeed has useful feedback that we can pass on to the organisers.

As a matter of interest, it was noted that those who purchased a new craft at the show were guaranteed a berth. This is an issue we will be looking at bearing in mind the waiting list for moorings.

Finally the long awaited regulation regarding Third Party Insurance has again been delayed. We will continue to press to get this implemented at the earliest opportunity.

Beau vents!

Mike Stevens, Chairman

Last Year's AGM

The AGM was held on 10th December and was attended by about 130 members – surely a record!

Chairman's Report

Mike Stevens read his Chairman's report covering the main issues and activities dealt with during the year. He highlighted a number of disappointments, including lack of communication and feedback from harbours; the much heralded 'one stop shop', which had not lived up to expectations; a further delay in introduction of compulsory 3rd party insurance and the recent unannounced loss of drop-off parking at Elizabeth marina.

During the summer the Harbourmaster had formed a Marine Leisure Growth Group. A number of ideas had been discussed including possible marinas at St Aubin, Havre des Pas, Gorey & St Catherine and the flooding of the Old Harbours.

Recognising that continued tax free marine fuel was dependent on growth in the marine leisure industry, the Committee had agreed that a positive stance should be taken, however strong representations had been made on a number of practical issues, including the importance of affordable moorings both for existing and new owners. He stressed that no decision had been taken as yet.

Finally he thanked Andy Rennell for his past service and welcomed Kevin Hennelly, who was elected to join the Committee.

Open Forum

Mike Stevens welcomed Asst. Minister MacLean and Myra Shacklady to the meeting. Dep. MacLean said he had been astonished by the sudden removal of drop-off parking spaces at Elizabeth marina and announced that alternatives would be available shortly. He also stressed the importance of generating marine leisure growth and of improving Harbours' communication with users.

Dep. MacLean and Myra Shacklady responded to topics raised from the floor including:-

- Boat owners parking at La Collette being retained when the nearby sheds were let.
- Restricted access around Elizabeth for safety reasons while the Castle Quay site was being developed.
- The possibility of locking the Old Harbours required considerable evaluation before any decision and should form part of a holistic plan

for the whole area East of Albert, including La Folie Inn.

- The perceived lack of security at Elizabeth due to staffing cuts had been addressed with staff daytime patrols and a security firm at night.
- Concern about the operation of waiting lists for berths had also been raised by the Committee and access would be granted to enable them to review the lists.
- Lack of management of the holding berth compared to Guernsey's efficiency.
- Cheaper contract mooring fees in adjacent French ports being a more relevant comparison than the UK south coast quoted by Harbours.

Dep. MacLean concluded by saying he was committed to improving standards and facilities.

The chairman closed the meeting at 9.15pm and invited members to join the Committee for a glass of wine and Matthew's excellent buffet. PDD

An Eye On Harbours' Bills

Harbours Bloomer 1 – You may recall that instead of using the usual June 2006 RPI when calculating the mooring fee increases for 2007, they used the higher September index. Asst. Minister MacLean agreed a correction for 2008, but unfortunately this was overlooked, so we've asked them to reduce the RPI for this year's calculation by 0.8%, being the amount of the overcharge.

Harbours Bloomer 2 – The announcement that the unit charge for electricity was to rise by 4.3% from the 1st January 2008 was unwelcome, but an error in its implementation made it worse! They entered the new unit rate into the computer *before* running off our January invoices, so its been applied to units consumed in the 4th quarter of 2007.

Worse still, we're told that a global correction is not possible so each account would have to be individually recalculated manually and a credit posted. This would be a major task – which we would all ultimately pay for – and since for most boats the amounts will be very small, practicality outweighs the principle.

Anyone who wishes to claim a refund should apply to Adam Tranter, the Marina & Moorings Manager. He can be reached at the Seven Day Shop or by email: a.tranter@gov.je.

PDD

GST and the Cruising Yachtsman

By the time this Newsletter is published the commencement of GST will have received extensive coverage in the media. However, I doubt whether it will have included much on the effects on a boat owner returning from a cruise to France, whose situation could be more complex than that of a ferry passenger with a bag of shopping. I therefore posed questions covering a number of scenarios to Michael Robinson, Head of the Customs and Immigration Service and I am grateful for his responses below.

As a reminder, in our 2003 Newsletter Customs explained the duty free allowances as: *"The basic allowance for goods liable to excise duty is 1 litre of spirits, 2 litres of table wine and 200 cigarettes for all people of 17 years and over. However, you can "mix and match" these allowances. Wine and beer are the most popular buys from France. If you bring no other excise goods you could, for example import 36 bottles of table wine or 75 litres of beer or cider."* (The wine allowed has since increased to 40 bottles, or 30 litres.)

It should be noted that, under the GST regime, the exemption limit for personal imports is not £400 worth of goods, as many people believe, but a £12 combined total of Impôt duty and GST on all items in one delivery. Furthermore, the 3% GST is also applied to any Impôt duty.

Customs Q & A

Q: Will the 'mix & match' duty free allowance of, for example, 36 bottles of table wine (provided there are no other dutiable items) continue?

A: Yes, the 'alternative duty free allowance' will continue to operate at Officers discretion, the proviso remains that the duty subject to relief should not exceed the total duty free value of the statutory personal reliefs allowed.

Q: In assessing the GST on all purchases (including the wine), does the duty on wine have to be added if the GST exceeds £12?

A: Goods imported in excess of personal relief allowances will first be charged to customs and or excise duties in order to obtain the full import value for the calculation of GST.

Q: Is GST applied to items left on board, for example food for consumption on a future trip?

A: All goods left on board will be deemed to have been imported and therefore will be liable to GST,

however, I very much doubt that a charge will ever be raised in these circumstances.

Q: What about opened and partially consumed items such as food, engine oil and fuel?

A: As above.

Q: Will owners be required to retain all receipts, including till rolls to evidence GST due?

A: When persons import goods liable to either duty or tax it is always prudent to retain evidence of value to assist in the calculation of any charges that may arise. In the event of being required to make an Import Declaration, the GST Law requires that relevant records should be retained for 6 years.

Q: Does the 'relief for goods imported after being exported for repairs/replacement' apply to repairs/replacement/maintenance to parts of a boat whilst cruising outside Jersey e.g. replacement of torn sails, damaged propellers, or a seized gearbox?

A: Returned Goods Relief will allow for the relief of GST on goods of Jersey origin which are returned in the same state as they were exported. This relief will continue to apply where goods have undergone treatment to maintain them in good condition. If, however, the goods undergo treatment outside of Jersey that is in excess of this then GST will be due on the added value of the goods on their return to Jersey.

Outward Processing Relief of GST will also be available to private individuals whereby goods may be temporarily exported from Jersey for repair provided that Customs are satisfied that the goods have not been enhanced. Again if the repair has resulted in an enhanced value, GST will be due on the difference between the value at export and re-import.

Q: What will be your preferred methodology for returning owners to report and settle any GST liability?

A: Customs has made a 'Voluntary Declaration Page', which you will find available on its website www.customs@gov.je. This will allow members of the public to make Declarations to Customs via the internet from any public access computer or from the convenience of their own homes. These declarations can be made before arrival or as soon as practicable after arrival but not later than 24 hours after arrival.

GST Examples

Mr Robinson's answers to my first two questions can best be illustrated by these examples:

Example 1.

<i>Goods imported</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Impôt Duty</i>	<i>GST</i>	<i>Total</i>
30 litres table wine	£60			Duty free
Other purchases	£300	nil	£9	£9

Total is less than £12, so no payment due.

Example 2.

30 litres table wine	£60			Duty free
Further 5 litres wine	£10	£7.09	£0.51	£7.60
Other purchases	£300	nil	£9	£9

Total payment due: £16.60.

PDD

Snippets

Marina Security – We've had reports of thefts from boats in all three marinas since last season and vandalism of facilities blocks is an on-going problem. Harbours are undertaking a full review of security arrangements. The key pad access, which provides rather illusory security, as code numbers soon become widely known, is to be replaced by proximity fobs at Elizabeth and St Helier and possibly also La Collette, if issues for users of the holding pontoon can be resolved. This system seems to work well in Binic and Morlaix marinas and the small added inconvenience should be a worthwhile trade-off for improved security.

It has also been suggested that a 'Boat-Watch' scheme could be set up and your Committee would welcome any comments on this idea, so please let us know what you think.

West France Log – Former Chairman of the Association, Peter Pitcher has spent the last two seasons based in La Rochelle and cruising the west coast of France as far south as Bordeaux. He has written a detailed log which makes a fascinating read and is full of useful information covering where you can get the friendliest welcome, the cheapest fuel, the best eating places, etc., which he is happy to share with any members planning to visit the area. Phone him on 730385 – if he's not already away cruising!

Cruising notes – Our intrepid Vice Chairman has

been out and about early this year - to avoid GST on his diesel - and finding out what's new for the season (he's still asking questions!):

The marina at **Le Legue** has been refurbished and there are now some shops and cafés nearby and they have plans to build a 1,000 berth marina in two phases by 2010; at **St Servan** a yacht club had been opened above the marina office; new 9m fingers had been installed at **Granville**; at **Cartaret** the marina has been dredged, together with the channel immediately outside the marina entrance. He has also heard rumours of work at Roscoff, possibly on a new marina.

Also, at St Malo's Bassin Vaubin, work has started on an underground car park for 480 cars. There is a very large hole where the bus station and the road beside the tourism office used to be, so expect noise and dust for some time! PDD

Notes from the Treasurer

For those of you who were unable to attend the AGM last December and view the Annual Accounts to 31st October 2007 I can inform you that the surplus of Income over Expenditure was £630 (2006-£462).

General printing costs remained low once again due to the loan of photocopying facilities and the Newsletter continues to be printed by Len Stevens' staff at Tillyards - our thanks to all concerned. Bank account balances totalled £6,104 (2006 - £5,474)

The sum of £800.00 was voted at the AGM to be split between the RNLI, Jersey Branch and CIAS and a special donation of £500 was approved to be made to the fund for the new lifeboat. Letters of appreciation have been received from the relevant Treasurers.

My thanks go to Mr Tim Scott Warren for auditing the accounts.

Membership at 31/10/06 was 556. During the financial year there were 30 resignations with 6 unpaid, but with 36 new members the final total as at 31st October 2007 was again 556. Since then 20 new members have joined, however I have received 16 resignations and 27 members' subscriptions remain outstanding. Maybe circumstances/addresses have changed, but I would be very grateful if you could let me know if you wish to resign.

As you can see, we have to work hard on recruitment just to maintain membership numbers and the Committee feel they have a 'stronger voice' if representing a greater number of boaters when liaising with Jersey Harbours etc.

You will find an Application Form enclosed with this Newsletter Please pass this on to a prospective new member! THANK YOU.

Subscriptions are a bargain at £5 single or £8 joint and I also have House Flags and car stickers for sale.

PH

The Old Harbours of St Helier.

With ideas for the development of the old harbours on the political agenda once again, the Committee is grateful to Mrs M-L Backhurst for providing some historical context:

Next time you go past the statue of George II in the Royal Square, thank him for the £200 that he gave to the island for the building of the South pier. He wasn't, however, the only contributor; money from impôts on wines and spirits, anchorage dues, cash and loans from wealthy merchants and lotteries all went towards the many attempts to create a pier.

St Aubin's Bay

Although there are bays all around Jersey which were used by visiting boats, the whole of St Aubin's Bay with its gently sloping sands was a particularly good haven in winds from most directions. It was only relatively recently that piers for unloading and deep water for permanent floating became essential requirements. Being able to careen a boat was useful for maintenance and small cargoes could be unloaded onto carts.

By about 1540 the demands both for better shelter and for defence were becoming pressing and a tower was built on the islet in the western end of the Bay with the small settlement called St Aubin beginning from that time. Ships employed in the Newfoundland trade could then over-winter off the new pier built at the end of the 17th century; normally, the fleet was based in the protected port of St Malo, but they had to use Jersey when England and France were at war.

Early St Helier Harbours

The east corner of St Aubin's Bay, near to the town of St Helier, has probably always been used as a port. There had been a Christian presence on the islet off the town of St Helier since at least the 7th century, with several ecclesiastical buildings, including the abbey church. Boats used a small haven on the east of the islet and Havre des Pas, even though the rocky approaches made navigation more hazardous. There is, however, a map of 1545 which clearly shows two stone piers near to where South pier is now, so the area under the Mont de la Ville was used from an early date. A havre neuf existed in the 1700s implying that there had been an older harbour. But the prevailing south-westerly winds took their toll on the nascent stone piers, and the records of the States of Jersey are full of accounts of constant re-building. The piers were also strengthened and doubled in size over the centuries.

Many ships also beached up near the Church of

St Helier, where a number of quays were built from the 17th century. Captain Jean Kerby, for example, built a sizeable quay in about 1770 where Bond Street and Cross Quay (later Street) are now.

La Folie Inn

A public house, ironically called La Folie, was by 1702 sited at the top of South Pier and later moved northwards to its present position. A harbour office, a crane and a forge were nearby. A lighter boat was also used to unload ships at anchorage in deep water. The area between the south pier and a quay, built about 1735, was known as Le Havre des Français, and to the north of the quay was Le Havre des Anglais. Le Coin aux Rats appears to have been in the corner of South pier.

A new north pier was started in 1790 running parallel to the Mont de la Ville until it reached some rocks known as Les Mulières. This quay was eventually extended further north in 1834 to reach the reclaimed land and doubled in width.

The merchant shipping fleet, which set out from Jersey to all over the world, made St Helier's harbour the seventh busiest in the British Isles and many plans (only some of which came to fruition) were put forward for its enlargement. The Victoria and Albert Piers were the result of James Walker's plans and were named after the Queen and the Prince Consort who visited the island in 1846. The shipbuilding industry, with yards on the south and east coasts, was, because of tax advantages, the fifth largest in the British Isles.

Further improvements such as considerable dredging and the building of the breakwater from Elizabeth Castle, all helped to provide deep water quays. In the late 20th century, the building of a commercial port, the Elizabeth Harbour and the new marina, added to Jersey's provisions for commercial and leisure maritime interests.

Our Heritage

The ancient drying harbours bounded by South pier and the North pier stand as testimony to Jersey's important maritime history and their strong granite walls are a permanent reminder of the dogged ambition by Jerseymen to maintain a harbour in a seemingly unfavourable position. Flooding the harbours to create marinas would totally destroy not only the sight of the fine granite, but also the constantly changing scene of the tide filling and then retreating from the harbours, together with the movement of the boats rising and falling. The very large tidal range meant that St Helier's harbours were built on dry land, and this unusual feature deserves our appreciation not only for practical, but for aesthetic reasons.

Marie-Louise Backhurst

Members' Discounts

Why not make the most of your membership by taking advantage of the discounts kindly offered by several local firms?

By showing them your membership card, you can get a 10% discount on most chandlery and clothing from **South Pier Marine** and **Iron Stores Marine** – *and I have it on good authority that the prospective new owners of South Pier Marine intend to continue offering this discount to our members.*

Adding to your enjoyment of non-boating pursuits, **Allied Traders Catering & Swimming Pool Division** and the **Mary Rose Restaurant** in Bath Street are also offering 10% discounts to members.

These are valuable benefits of membership of the Association, so do always carry your card – and tell your friends!

PDD

Your Committee for 2008

If you have any harbour or marina related issues, please do let us know. Make contact with one of the officers, or any committee member. We try to monitor the facilities regularly, but we can't be everywhere, so your feedback is important.



Mike Stevens, Chairman

Tel: 853233

“L'Ecreviere” Elizabeth Marina



Peter Donne Davis, Secretary

Tel: 863765

“Midnight Blue” St Helier Marina



Martyn Anderson

Tel: 735631

“Jabot” Elizabeth Marina



Heather Dumosch

Tel: 878475

“Mystique” French Harbour



Rohan Minkley

Tel: 852588

“Herons Flight” La Collette



Phil Rondel, Vice Chairman

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“Papa Whiskey” St Helier Marina



Penny Hatter, Treasurer/Members

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“Sundream” St Helier Marina



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“April Rose” Elizabeth Marina



Kevin Hennelly

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“Indybar” St Helier Harbour



Roger Thebault

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“Araok” La Collette