

## **CAMSAIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2024/25**

We started our 24/25 season with a talk from Sarah Curtis who runs the Harry King and Sons boatyard at Pin Mill on the River Orwell. The yard has a history of building and maintaining wooden craft from yachts to fishing boats and barges for over 175 years. Sarah told us that the work done today are repairs and maintenance of a large number of moorings on the river.

In November we had a talk from Liz and Dave White about their experiences sailing round the world in their 34ft yacht over a five year period. This they did with their two boys aged five and eight. Via the Panama Canal they visited the Galapagos Islands and various islands in the Pacific through to Australia and New Zealand. Their return journey took in Australia, Borneo, Indonesia, India, the Red Sea and then the Mediterranean where they stayed for a year. It was interesting to hear how the boys were educated by Liz and Dave and how they benefitted from their experiences on the voyage.

In December we held our AGM where we said farewell and thanks to Ann Jackson and welcomed Lotti Kuhn to the committee. Janet Morris and her husband gave an interesting talk about their experiences of an Orca attack on a charter boat in the approaches to the Gibraltar Straits. The attacks have become quite common in these waters leading to yachts getting severely damaged. In their case they returned to port for repairs.

After that I think we were all ready for mulled wine and mince pies.

We began our January meeting with a talk by David Davies who is the chairman of the Society of Nautical Research. David's talk was about Samuel Pepys and his connections with Harwich. Pepys was involved with the development of the shipyard and docks at Harwich where he was also the MP. He was also the most influential administrator in British Naval History.

In February we welcomed John Aylmer who has been sailing in the Dalmatian area for many years. He started by explaining the social and political background of Croatia as a state with the confederation of Yugoslavia and then the breakup of the latter, Croatia becoming an independent republic and joining the EU. His first experiences were family sailing and that progressed to flotilla sailing, instructing and bareboat chartering. A most interesting account of experiences which have involved some members of Camsail.

At our final meeting in March, Mark Humphries described how he came across the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race almost by chance by taking the road down to the St. Katharine Dock from which the fleet for the 2019 race were just about to set off. Although he had no real sailing experience, he decided soon after to sign up for Leg1 (from Portsmouth to Punta del Este in Uruguay) of the next race. His excellently illustrated talk included the selection process, the training weekends, his introduction to the skipper and the rest of the crew, as well as the race itself. It was clearly an unforgettable experience for him, and the breadth of questions at the end showed how he had caught our imaginations by telling of his experiences aboard a yacht somewhat larger than most of us are familiar with!

### **Barge Trip aboard Victor: 24 June 2025**

16 members and friends enjoyed a trip on the Thames Barge Victor from Ipswich down to Harwich and back. There was an opportunity to take the helm which many did and from the reports everyone had a really enjoyable day.

We had 49 paid up members this season and the average attendance was 28.

John Aylmer was unwell in the Autumn period and was unable to attend any meetings. I would like to thank John Peregrine for taking on the secretarial tasks during this time, and also Janet Morris for her IT input at these meetings