



Sailing
Racing

Social
Events

Cruise
Outs

Cruise
In's

Managed by Club
Volunteers



Sierra Point Yacht Club

Spyglass Newsletter – October 2016

Website: <http://www.sierrapointyc.org>

The fun yacht club of the San Francisco Bay Join the family



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1. Editors update

Well! I am finally back from my two-and-a-half month sojourn to Bembridge on the Isle of Wight – The Island where I was born and grew up on. My family house (which I still own and is my bolt hole to try to get away from this crazy world - this election farce as an example) is only five minutes walk from several beaches, and 15 minutes walk from our local harbour. And so I grew up in and out of the sea and with expert wooden boat builders and maintainers – friends I am still close to 50 years on. This month's Spyglass will be a light edition as I have received no articles to include from members. Please send me any article or other input by the 10th of each month to: Nigelbaker10@yahoo.com

I will include in this month's edition a short overview of the history of British Hovercraft development, an area of technology that I am passionate about as I served my apprenticeship with the British Hovercraft Corporation (BHC) and I have some very amusing tales of sea trials on most classes of BHC hovercraft.

It is my intent to give a much more detailed presentation of the history of British Hovercraft development at some later (pot luck) date at the club.

This edition is a little late this month waiting for some last minute input. Also we have a club boat for sale (see next agenda item). In next month's edition we will have some interesting articles including Ted and Irene's wedding, and Jason and Michelle's visit to the Farallon Islands as well as a club website update from Frank.

2. Club boat for sale

\$1.00 Project Boat For Sale \$1.00

A 1976 San Juan 24 (registration CF 6871 FZ, hull number CLKDO 6360376) owned by the SPYC is in need of a new owner that will fix it up after years of neglect. "Project Boat" is an accurate description but anyone willing to put the time and energy into cleaning and fixing it up will have a fast small boat for day sailing or weekend overnights. Equipment includes a 6 hp. Johnson outboard motor (did not start last time it was tried), a new portable toilet, new orange pfd's, sails, Garmin GPS, CD player. This boat is sold "as is". That means there is no guarantee of seaworthiness or that any part of the boat or its equipment works.

Before October 24th contact Quincy Bragg. October 24th or later contact Jason Fox.

The boat is located at dock 1 slip 44.

3. Club general update

The annual Board of Directors (BoD) election meeting was held during the monthly dinner event at the club on October 15th.

The elected BoD members for 2017 are:

Officers:

Commodore:	Quincy Bragg. Many thanks to Jason Fox for his past tenure
Vice Commodore:	Kathy McCormac
Rear Commodore:	Tony Bezzina
Port Captain:	Ed Wilkinson
Fleet Captain:	Kathy Stern
Secretary:	John Gunther
Treasurer:	Terry O'Connell
Past Commodore:	Jason Fox

Directors:

Melissa Vivas
Patrick Lydon
Michael Bell
Nigel Baker
Terry Berger
Ozzie Orozco

The October dinner was hosted by Chef Toeti Taylor-Weber featuring an Indonesian menu that was a delight and I believe well received by the folks who attended. The Beef Rendang was especially delightful, and the fried bananas with ice cream...yum.


4. Events calendar

The Sunday breakfasts are in Winter mode now and will be held on the first Sunday of each month. Please come to the club on those Sundays and have a good breakfast and socialize with other members and guests. Normal fare comprises scrambled eggs (with goodies added), bacon lovely bacon, sausages, fried potatoes, and either fruit or cake for desert.

The Friday evening pot luck events at the club are also very popular and a great way to unwind on a Friday evening, eat some good food and socialize with club members and guests.

The next monthly dinner will occur a week early than usual on November 12th so as not to conflict with Thanksgiving.

NOVEMBER 12TH
dinner : 7 pm

chefs : Terry O'Connell 
and Kathy McCormac

THE GRAND CHILI COOKOFF

**Bring a small bowl of your very best chili to
enter in the competition.**

**Entrants receive free dinner.
All entries must be home made.
Chili will be served and judged as appetizers
Democratic judging process
Lots of prizes**

**Cost : Adult - \$20 : Child - \$12
(12 and under) \$5 surcharge for walk-ins**

Please register before noon on the day of the event. You may register on the website (<http://www.SierraPointYC.org/calendar> and clicking on the event), by sending an email (kmccormac@sbcglobal.net), or a telephone message ((415) 399-1722). Please get the info to me somehow. There will be a \$5 surcharge each if you are not registered

5. Cruise Out Update

The proposed cruiseout to Lock Lommond was unfortunately cancelled due to the small number of boats signed up. The next cruiseout will be to **Sausalito on the weekend of November 11th to 13th** and hosted by the Sausalito Yacht Club. Our berthing will be at the Schoonmaker marina. Space is limited so sign up early. Sausalito is a great venue and I personally know some very good eateries – such as the local fish and chip shop, Sailor's, and Le garage bistro. This bistro is situated at the marina – a five minute walk from our berths

6. Beer can race update

The last race of the season was on August 30th and the racing year ended officially on September 24th at the Club monthly dinner where racers were honored for their participation this year. It was a good evening with plenty of talk, laughter, and rehashing of this or that race.

Next year the first race will be on Tuesday May 2nd and we will again have 18 race dates. I look forward to another enjoyable season of sailboat racing on the Bay.

Although the Race Committee is now slipping ever so gently into winter hibernation I am always looking for volunteers to help run the program. The work includes updating the rules, starting the races from the committee boat, judging the finishes, organizing the

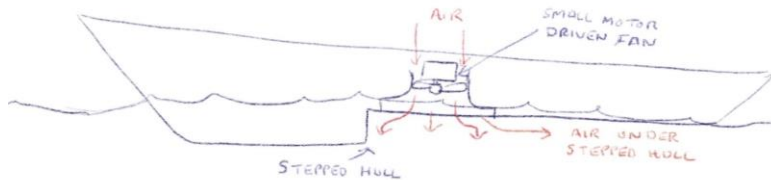
food for dinner after racing, and tending the bar at dinner. If you would like to participate in helping to assure the continuing success this program - let me know.



Quincy Bragg, SPYC Race Committee Chairman racing@sierrapointyc.org

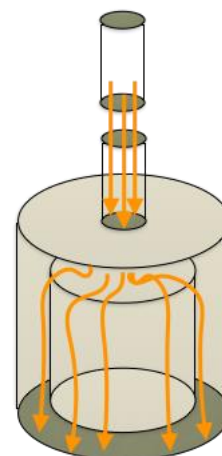
7. A Brief History of the Development of British Hovercraft

It all started when Sir John Thornycroft, a leading designer of small fast boats in the 1870's started to investigate how to reduce drag on the underside of his fast craft hulls. He came up with a stepped hull design that trapped air under the concave part of the hull hence reducing drag. He further enhanced this design by forcing air from a motor driven fan down into the concave portion of the hull which further reduced drag – in effect an air cushion that enabled the after two thirds of the hull to be virtually off the water



This concept was never incorporated into Thornycroft small fast craft and so, although several designs of air cushion designs were investigated, no real development took place until after the experiments of Sir Christopher Cockerill that took place in 1952.

One of the main problems with the early experiments with air cushion vehicles was the lack of enough air pressure under the 'hull' or platform to be able to suspend and propel a hull or platform above the air chamber. Christopher Cockerill came up with a concept called 'Annular air pressure' and experimented the concept using two cans and a vacuum cleaner. His theory was that if air was forced down through an annular and narrow slot around the perimeter of a platform the air would flow towards the center of the platform and would maintain an air cushion of specific pressure.



The forced airflow exiting around the perimeter - an annular air flow – sustained an area of high air pressure under the inner can which allowed much heavier loads to be supported on the air cushion.

Cockerill's experiment led to him developing a successful working model (the original is in my friend Martin Woodward's museum), and Cockerill demonstrated it to government officials who gave him the go ahead and funding to develop the design initially for military use but with a view for commercial use.



This development was undertaken in collaboration with Saunders Roe – an amphibious plane and boat builder on the Isle of Wight. This development led to the famous first true Hovercraft in 1959 named SR-N1 (Saunders Roe Nautical number one)

The SR-N1 was an annular air flow design with a radial piston engine driving a single large fan that directed air to the plenum as well as through ducts for forward and reverse motion. This craft crossed the English Channel in late 1959 and was piloted by lead test Pilot Peter (Sheepy) Lamb who I knew personally when I was an apprentice. Christopher Cockerill was also aboard for the 'flight' and it successfully crossed the English Channel from Calais to Dover.

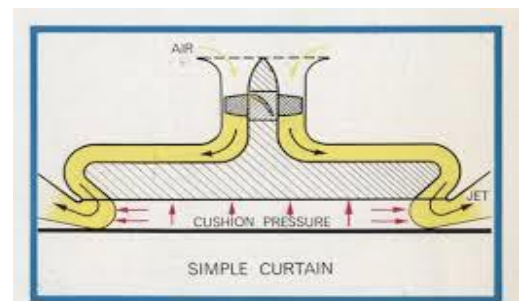


Fig. 2. Cross-section through diagrammatic craft showing air-flow.

There are some interesting stories about this flight which I will divulge in my detailed presentation. Sheepy was joined by another Pilot, my good friend Bob Strath (who is still alive today and lives on the Isle of Wight) and together they went on to be lead test pilots for all subsequent Hovercraft development when Saunders Roe became the British Hovercraft Corporation (BHC). Oh! And by the way they were both crazy pilots...the right stuff.

The SR-N1 proved the viability of Hovercraft based on Cockerill's annular air cushion principles that led to government funding to develop the craft for commercial and military applications under the newly formed British Hovercraft corporation. The SR-N1 went through several design improvements, the

most important being the addition of a 'skirt' that allowed the craft to clear 4 feet high obstacles and reach speeds of over 50 knots.

With a history of aviation, BHC developed very sophisticated and leading edge craft based on aircraft technology including gas turbine power and radical gearbox, propeller and air fan designs. Several generations of both commercial and military hovercraft were produced at BHC culminating in the magnificent SR-N4 which carried cars and passengers at over 70 knots across the English Channel between England and France.

I will list the main craft below with brief descriptions, and will describe them more in my presentation. Please feel free to ask any questions to me at the club.



The SR-N2. The first commercial craft that carried passengers across the Solent. Powered by 4 gas turbines driving two air fans and two pylon mounted variable pitch propellers. This was basically a test craft and carried about 20 passengers at speeds of up to 60 knots



The SR-N3. A military version that carried troops and also land vehicles. This craft was also designed to move over water based mines without exploding them



The famous SR-N4. This magnificent machine boasted 4 Proteus gas turbine engine driving 4 fans and 4 pylon mounted 21 feet variable pitch propellers. Top speed of over 70 knots and could clear 7 feet obstacles. Several versions of the craft operated across the English Channel for over 20 years. I have been out on trials on this craft handling strain gauge instrumentation and have some good stories to tell.



The SR-N5. Actually this craft and the SR-N6 stretched version were produced prior to the SR-N4. This craft was designed for both military and commercial use and initially carried around 15 passengers. Top speed around 60 knots. Been out on this one



The SR-N6. A stretched version of the SR-N5. Passenger capacity increased to 28 and was the most produced version. Also military types. Been out on this one too.



The military only designed BH-7 that could carry troops and two tanks. This machine was powered by one Proteus gas turbine with a air fan and pylon driven 21 foot variable pitch prop. A mean machine that could top 80knots and clear well over 8 feet obstacles. I went out on this machine several times when on trials and have some great stories to tell over a glass of wine or two at the club

The above is basically a summary of the major craft developed at BHC. There are other craft and follow-on manufactures, specifically Griffin Hovercraft that still manufacture commercial and industrial/military hovercraft today. We have a Griffin built hovercraft that operate between the Isle of Wight and the English mainland. If you are ever over that way you must try a ride on this service...great fun.

8. English expression of the month

'To piss in one's cornflakes'. Means to really annoy, upset or disappoint someone through spiteful or irresponsible behavior. Anyone come to mind – a certain presidential candidate maybe?