



Cruising

www.theca.org.uk

CA membership hits 6,000
Keeping warm in winter
Why not cruise in Crete?



Welcoming the 6,000th CA member



The Cruising Association is celebrating welcoming its 6,000th member.

During the busiest Southampton Boat Show the CA has known in recent years, Lorna & David Price signed up and received a surprise bottle of champagne. They joined the 141 others who became members at the show, and 24 who joined at Scotland's Boat Show in October, as well as the thousands of cruising people sailing in local UK rivers and estuaries, across Biscay, in the Baltic, down to the Med and Blue Water, or even in the Antipodes.

The CA is now the biggest UK member association looking after cruising people, overtaking RNSA, the Royal Naval cruising club, last year.

Latest update on red diesel

Following the update in September's *Cruising*, RATS remained active on the red diesel issue. We had meetings with the Belgian Ambassador, our HMRC Tax Team and Craig McKinlay MP, and wrote to our HLR and other contacts to persuade Belgium to continue their temporary suspension of fining UK vessels.

In particular, a cordial and constructive discussion with the Belgian Ambassador to the UK, Rudolf Huygelen (a discussion which we understand was welcomed by the Belgian Finance Minister) led to him putting our case to his government.

RATS sent our message to all of the EU members states' representatives on the EU Indirect Tax Group – which advises the EU Commission on tax matters – outlining the reasons why all EU states should harmonise with France and the Netherlands by not banning the use of UK red propulsion diesel when UK vessels first enter their waters.

We were not able to obtain a detailed report of the Tax Group's September meeting, but we believe that they did not reach a firm conclusion. The European Court of Justice had just publicly issued a Case Number for the hearing of the EU Commission's complaint over the marking of UK red and Irish green diesel, so this may have prevented the Tax

Group from discussing the matter further.

The Ambassador personally wrote to RATS, to explain that "the policy of tolerance regarding red diesel in UK-flagged yachts visiting Belgium will be maintained until further notice. Any change to this policy will be communicated in due time". Ian Wilson and the Embassy First Secretary, Laurent Preud'homme, had harmonious conversations which culminated in an agreed CA press release, along with the confirmation that any change to the Belgian policy would be notified directly to RATS – the only organisation to have this privilege.

As the CA's president, Judith Grimwade, said: "We were glad to secure the agreement that this status quo would not change without warning, on behalf of the boating community in the UK."

The press release and updated advice note for members considering sailing to Belgium, can be seen on the RATS pages, at www.theca.org.uk/rats/red_diesel_use_in_belgium.

One of our helpful Belgian contacts has written to RATS confirming that the details contained in our press release have been recorded by his marina. As a result, we have real confidence that our



advice to members is accurate and it is safe for them to visit Belgian ports and marinas.

RATS has a continuing programme:

- to keep members fully informed
- to monitor developments
- to keep a watch on the UK case at the EU and ECJ
- to learn as much as possible about current and future developments in the status of red diesel.

Please contact RATS at rats@theca.org.uk on any general points or personal experience on the use of red diesel.

Colin Heywood



Woolverstone Project boats out on the water



We do mean to go to sea

Cruising event to raise funds for disabled sailing

A conference for all who go cruising has been organised with all profits going to help disabled people to go sailing.

The Cruising Association and the Woolverstone Project, which works to offer sailing for disabled people, have got together to organise the one-day event – We Do Mean To Go To Sea – on March 11, 2018, at the Royal Hospital School near Ipswich.

The conference will offer attendees a chance to explore a diverse range of cruising destinations, hear entertaining speakers and come away with new skills.

From now until December 31 there's a discount on the ticket price at £45 for a single or £80 for two.

Well-known sailors including Paul Heiney

and Dave Selby will offer talks and there will be a series of 45-minute workshops on cruising information and skills, boat preparation and maintenance, how to organise affairs back home for long term absence and information on a range of popular destinations – all presented by people with first-hand experience.

Tickets are available through the conference website on www.cruisingconference.co.uk.

Paul Heiney, patron of the Woolverstone Project, said: "We are delighted to have the support of the CA in organising this conference for such a worthy cause. You don't have to cross oceans to reap the rewards [of sailing]. For many of the people the Project helps, getting

themselves by their own efforts and skills from one side of a reservoir to the other, is achievement enough.

"I have seen people return from such trips, and even though they might not be able to speak the words to express it, the look of triumph on their faces says it for them."

The Woolverstone Project provides sailing opportunities and tuition for those with disabilities with sailing throughout the year at a local reservoir, and during the summer months at Woolverstone on the River Orwell in Suffolk. They have been helping disabled people for more than 20 years with the enthusiastic support of more than 60 volunteers. There is a fleet of 22 boats – all adapted so that they can be sailed by anyone, whatever their disability. In 2016, 417 sailing sessions involving 1350 sailors with 1055 carers were run, with the support of 406 volunteers.

■ Do you know of a company which might help to sponsor the event? The organisers already have the support of Fox's Marina and Boatyard but hope to find another five sponsors, each contributing £300.

Contact: Andy Beharrell, Trustee – Woolverstone Project, c/o Spital Acre, The Street, Salcott, Essex CM9 8HW. Email web@woolverstoneproject.org.uk or phone +44 (0)7540 635749

REASONS TO BE A CA MEMBER

- Comprehensive, user-friendly website www.theca.org.uk with thousands of pages of information, advice and expertise, members' forums, boats and gear for sale and wanted, and much more
- World-class library of books, charts, pilots and logs in print and electronic form
- Discounts on key products and services
- Quarterly magazine
- Wide range of topical and authoritative publications
- RATs: the Regulations and Technical Services group fights to protect the interests of cruising sailors
- Convivial bar and excellent food at CA House
- Shared expertise: whatever your cruising plans, members will be able to help with experience and advice
- Area Sections covering key cruising grounds at home and abroad
- Honorary Local Representatives (HLRs) to help and advise visiting yachtsmen all over the world
- A crewing service matching skippers and crew
- Overnight accommodation available at very competitive rates at CA House only ten minutes from the City of London
- *The Cruising Almanac* published annually by Imray
- Winter season social, training and lecture programme



Lobster pot campaign relaunched at Southampton

After the hiatus of the spring General Election, we were at last able to re-post our petition on the marking of static fishing gear, and it went live during the Southampton Boat Show. There was a lot of interest among visitors to the CA stand, with many signing on the spot via our iPad. As we go to press, we have well over 5,500 signatures. Encouraging, but still a way to go.

We are in the process of mailing sailing clubs with details, offering them a specially designed poster, and are promoting the cause through our social media channels.

Behind the scenes, we are busy talking to various stakeholders, including the fishing community of course. Ian Wilson, who leads the campaign, was recently invited to write a blog entry for the website of the National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations. In it, Ian says: "We, in the Cruising Association,

A reminder of the petition wording

Lobster pots & small craft safety – time to change the rules!

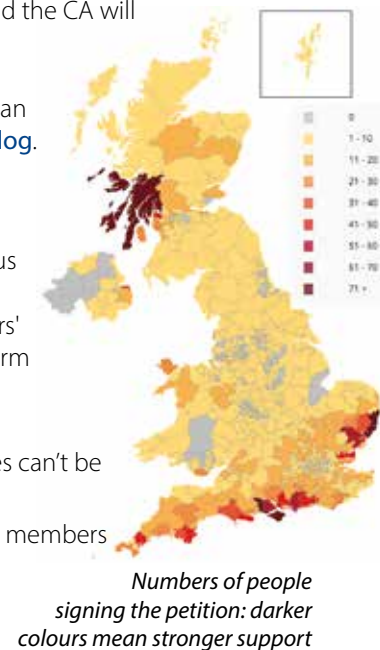
We, the undersigned, urge the Minister of State (DEFRA) to improve the way static fishing gear is marked for the safety of all small craft at sea. The current, voluntary, guidance is not adequate. We ask that DEFRA seeks views regarding enforceable regulation among other options.

have a long history (since 1908) of cultivating positive relationships with those who work at sea. We are not in the business of telling fishermen what to do. However, everyone who respects the sea and the weather understands risk, and shares a mutual interest in harm reduction and the preservation of life...I am pleased that NFFO and the CA will be meeting again, irrespective of the outcome of the petition or the number of signatures it gets." You can read the full entry at nffo.org.uk/blog.

Remember, if you support our campaign, please:

- carry on reporting incidents to us via lobsterpots@theca.org.uk and go to the link from the CA members' homepage to fill in the new RYA form
- sign the petition at petition.parliament.uk/petitions/200001 even if you did so in spring, as votes can't be carried over
- tell your friends, family and club members about what we are trying to do.

Alison Hadley



Fishing gear marks: experiences reported to the CA

This is just a selection of emails sent to lobsterpots@theca.org.uk.

Pat Williams said: "Two years ago we were sailing our Westerly Centaur in quite rough seas when our anchor became detached from its pulpit fixing. All the anchor chain ran out and the anchor became entangled in a mesh of ropes. Every time the anchor was hauled up, a number of lobster pots were drawn closer to the boat. After attempting for an hour to release the boat we had to ditch our anchor. Considerable damage was done to the paintwork of our bows. We were in Pennyhole Bay, just outside the Walton Backwaters in Essex."

David Clough told us of about a dozen pairs of very small marker buoys directly on the channel in the Swellies, between Anglesey and the mainland, one of the most dangerous tidal zones in the UK with a navigable channel 10m wide at HW slack and tides up to 8/9 knots. A yacht on passage had to change course on multiple occasions to avoid them. The harbourmaster for Caernarfon Harbour Trust responded: "As and when we encounter pot buoys in the main channel we remove them... Our present rule is there is no fishing equipment to be laid in the navigable channel."

Simon James described an October trip from Falmouth to Padstow where tidal constraints meant sailing part of the time in the dark. "We reached the outer entrance to Padstow about 1900 and a minefield of lobster pots. The one we saw was only about 2m to our port side...When we got in, the harbourmaster said, 'you were brave to motor through the lobster pots at this time of night!' It effectively means harbours like Padstow become unavailable after dark." **Roger Lloyd** also reported an entanglement off Padstow in the dark among several other incidents.

Chris Waynforth reported an entanglement with a pot marked only with a white water-drum as he was sailing into Harwich Harbour. He says: "There were two pots, we avoided the first, but the strong current pushed us on the second which was only visible from a short distance. The line caught between my rudder and hull. We were under sail at the time, on a rising tide. I made a Pan-Pan call to the coastguard who sent out the inshore lifeboat from Harwich. A member of their crew got into the water, cut the line free and removed the water can, then freed the line from between the rudder and hull. Fortunately the line did not foul the propeller."

Stay warm – and safe – in winter

Eberspächer has been supplying marine heating systems to leisure boaters for 40 years. Senior engineer **Peter Collard** advises on how to make the best heating choices for your boat

As winter approaches in the northern hemisphere, you may be laying up the boat and planning for next year – or you may stay on board throughout the winter season, or go out for the occasional daysail. Unless you're in the tropics, an independent on-board heating system is probably essential. If you sail in northern Europe, there may be some days at any time of year when you need heating on your boat.

There are many types of heater systems including oil, LPG and solid fuel, but the most popular are diesel-fuelled on-board heating systems that circulate air or water.

Why fit a heater on board?

Apart from the advantages of being warm and comfortable on board, an often overlooked feature is that the heater will also dry your boat along with lockers, clothes, bedding and even your toilet paper!

What is the advantage of diesel over other fuels?

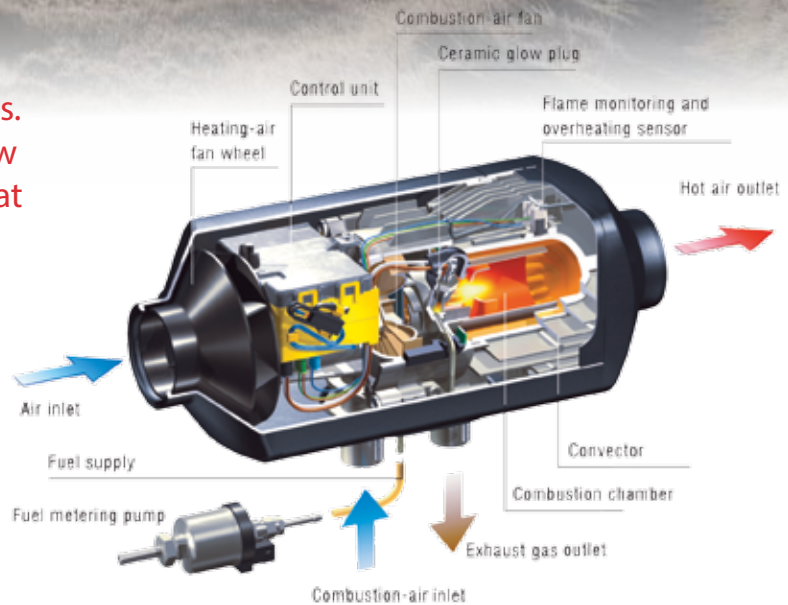
Diesel is drawn from the main fuel tank, has a high calorific value, produces little or no carbon monoxide and no condensation. The blown-air system operates easily when the boat is heeling under way or buffeted by adverse sea conditions, consumes no oxygen from internal areas and has never caused accidental death or injury. It isn't cheap, though – a diesel blown-air system starts around £2,000, plus fitting. Gas is cheaper to install but can get through a big (Campingaz 907) cylinder in 24 hours. Stove-type heaters can be affected by heeling and may not heat the whole boat.

Is a diesel heater safe?

Yes, extremely safe. The combustion process does not come into contact with the heated air entering the boat at any time. Exhaust is extracted through a stainless steel double lagged pipe exiting the hull via a twin-walled skin fitting. The unit itself monitors flame and exhaust temperatures, heat exchanger and air or water temperatures.

How much fuel will a heater use?

The Eberspächer system most often fitted to sailing cruisers is the Airtronic, which comes in four sizes from 2.2kW to 8kW. It blows warmed air into each cabin of the boat through a flexible duct system controlled by a thermostat in the saloon. If sized correctly, a smaller heater will burn about 5.5 litres of diesel in 24 hours. All sizes need a 12V or 24V electricity supply and take diesel from the boat's fuel tank.



What is the difference between marine and vehicle kits?

Although the heaters are identical, the marine installation kit is very different. Many of the vehicle kit components are coated steel; marine components need to be stainless. In an Eberspächer kit, brackets, plates and clamps are engineered to be sea safe. The exhaust is three times longer and double-lagged. The wiring looms are longer and the whole kit including the fuel system passes the latest marine safety regulations.

What are the pitfalls of buying from the internet?

Many new and secondhand heaters being sold on the internet today are designated as original equipment manufacturers' (OEM) heaters. This means they were designed and destined for specific vehicles or, if secondhand, have previously been fitted to a vehicle as a standard factory option. The heater may look identical to the universal version but can differ in many ways, such as different wiring, switching protocol or internal parts.

Can I fit the heating myself?

Yes, if you are competent, but it's worth getting the installation checked by a certified engineer. We estimate 98% of problems can be attributed to installation faults.

Should I use white or red diesel?

Nowadays, all diesel is ultra-low sulphur so both types will run equally clean. There is no need to run a separate tank.

Peter Collard, Engineering Project Manager – Marine, has looked after the marine division for Eberspächer UK for 12 years. There are few types of yacht or motor boat for which he has not personally installed or designed a heating system. For further information, go to www.eberspacher.com.



Why not cruise in Crete?



Tony Cross, the CA's HLR for Crete, invites you to join him on a Greek island where you will be the only yacht in most anchorages and can sail all day without seeing another boat... but you have to avoid the strong winds of high summer



Suppose I told you that there was a cruising ground in Greece where you will be the only yacht in most anchorages and where you can even sail all day and not see another yacht, would you think that a fantasy? It's not, though. The cruising ground is in fact the largest island in Greece – the island of Crete.

Crete has far more than its fair share of tiny coves, expansive bays, and crystal clear waters. It also has a history going back to the Neolithic period, and more Minoan, Venetian and Roman remains than you can shake a stick at. Its mountain ranges contain peaks amongst the highest in Greece, sheltering tiny villages that seem not to have changed in hundreds of years.

There is a catch of course, otherwise Crete would be as popular a destination as the Ionian. The catch is the weather. You have to come here at the right time.

When to come

In the summer months of July and August the northerly Meltemi winds push big seas on to the northern coast of Crete and through the two straits at each end of the island. On the south coast the Meltemi

winds tumble down from the high mountains causing powerful gusts at sea, especially near the mouths of the many gorges. High summer is a time to avoid Crete if you're in a small yacht.

In May and early June however, and especially in late September and October – even into November – the largely settled conditions make for perfect sailing weather, night-time and morning calms and a gentle afternoon sea breeze.

Lying far to the south of the rest of Greece, summer starts early on Crete and ends late. It's not unusual to have air temperatures in the low 20's even as late as Christmas. The sea holds its temperature right through to the end of the year, so in November, say, the sea is almost as warm as the air.

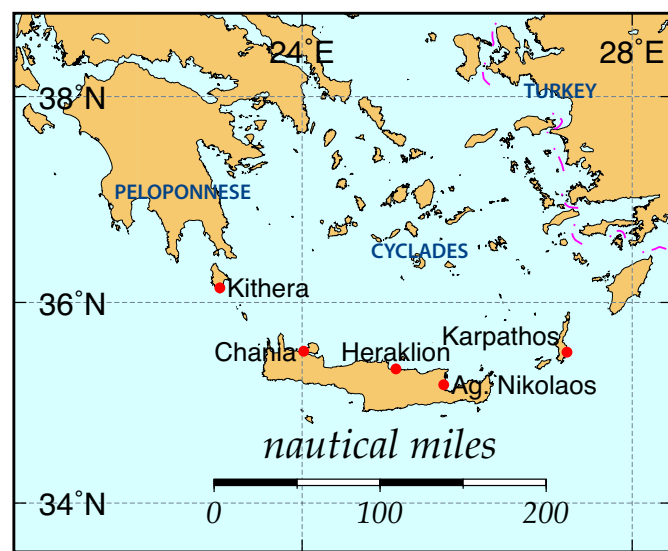
If you come at the right time Crete is a jewel waiting to be discovered. If you winter your yacht in the excellent marina at Agios Nikolaos on Crete you'll have ample time to explore the whole island at

either the start or the end of the summer sailing season. If you stay aboard for at least part of the winter you'll have plenty of time to venture inland to find the real beauty of Crete too.

How to get here

There are three main sailing routes to Crete: from the Peloponnese, from Turkey, and from the Cyclades.

The Peloponnese route is the one used by most people coming down from the rest of Greece. From almost any port or





Left, the lagoon at Gramvousa; above, Chania's Venetian lighthouse. Bottom, sailing on the remote south coast

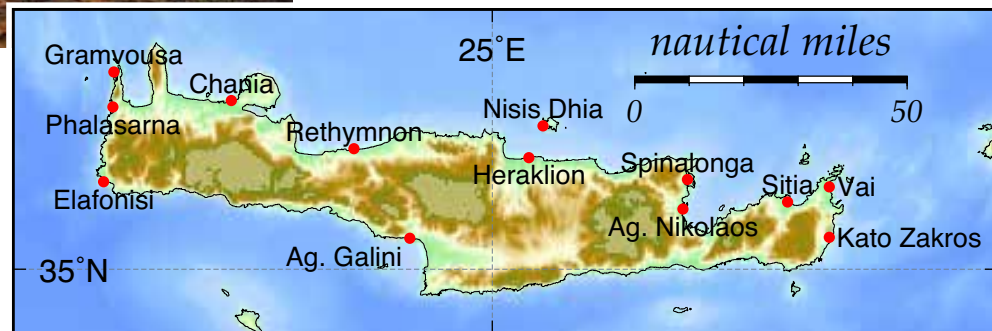
anchorage in the southern Peloponnese a night stop on the island of Kithera makes for an easy day sail to the port of Chania or the anchorage at Gramvousa. We always choose a calm and settled day to cross from Kithera and accept that we'll be mostly motoring. Sailing winds bring large and uncomfortable seas in the Kithera Strait; in F6 winds, for example, seas of 2m to 3m can be expected here.

The Turkey route is used by those coming down the Dodecanese or from Turkey. Night stops at Rhodes, or better still the small islands of Chalki or Alimia, and another at the islands of Kassos or Karpathos, enable you to reach the port of Sitia or the marina at Agios Nikolaos in a long day sail. As with the Kithera Strait, the Karpathos Strait gets big and uncomfortable seas in even moderately strong winds. We were once forced to sail from Kassos to Sitia in a decreasing F7 and we had 4m to 5m seas on our beam all the way across. Not much fun.

The Cyclades route has the benefit of being mostly a southerly sail with winds and seas mostly astern, though that too can be uncomfortable. There is also a choice of destination with this route depending on wind and seas. The ports at Rethymnon and Heraklion, and even the marina at Agios Nikolaos, are reachable in a very long day/night sail from most places in the southern Cyclades. The challenge with this route is that there is nowhere to stop on the way, so once you start you are committed.

Where to cruise

There are really two main choices for cruising locations on Crete; the safe north coast where there are many good ports within easy day sail reach, or the more exposed south coast where there are only three safe ports, all well over a day's sailing apart.



If you choose to cruise the northern coast it really doesn't matter in which direction you travel, although west to east is easier than east to west. The prevailing north-westerly winds mean that the winds are almost always abaft the beam when travelling eastwards. The major ports of Chania, Rethymnon, Heraklion, Agios Nikolaos and Sitia all have good mooring facilities for yachts and are all within easy reach of one another. Sadly, most anchorages on the north coast are open to the north and therefore uncomfortable if there is any north in the wind. One notable exception is the fairly sheltered lagoon and anchorage under Gramvousa Island on the far north-west corner of Crete, safe in almost any northerly or westerly winds. We once hid out there for two days from a northwesterly force 8.

The south coast of Crete is like another world – it has more in common with North Africa than it does with southern Europe. The sunshine is brighter here, the sky is bluer, it's much warmer, and the sea is generally calmer. At the western end of the south coast the White Mountains rise straight out of the sea and you find yourself sailing alongside 2km high peaks. Sailing the south coast of Crete has nothing in common with sailing anywhere else in Greece, it really is a world away.

The main problem with sailing the south coast is the lack of safe ports. Southerlies on the south coast are deadly. We were once trapped in the safest port on the

south coast (Agia Galini) in a force 8 and the sea was crashing easily over the 4m high outer wall. Had we been anywhere else on the south coast at the time we'd have been in very serious trouble. In strong northerlies most of the anchorages on the south coast are safe, as long as they are nowhere near the mouth of a gorge – the winds accelerate out of these at many times the gradient wind speed. If you cruise the south coast in spring or autumn, however, the chances of strong northerly winds are minimal and the chances of *any* southerly wind are remote.

What to see

Gramvousa island on the far north-west corner of Crete is the must-see place. It's only accessible by boat or by 4x4 vehicle so although there are many tourists there by day, mostly on tripper boats, it's completely deserted at night. In the





Left, Agios Nikolaos is home to Crete's only "proper" marina but still retains its fishing port charm. Right, the Dorian ruins of Lato, near Agios Nikolaos, are among numerous Minoan, Roman, Dorian, Byzantine and other sites



southern end of the lagoon is Balos island and some of the most beautiful sandy beaches and calm crystal clear waters to be found anywhere.

The city of **Chania** still retains much of its Venetian charm, including the famous Venetian lighthouse still doing its job in the harbour entrance. In the port are several old Venetian warehouses and an Ottoman-era mosque – it's now used as the port offices and an art gallery. Chania is a lively, bustling and noisy place, even in spring and autumn, and the town quay is a popular place with bars, tavernas and lots of tourists. Chania is also the best place from which to organise a walk down the Samaria Gorge, reputedly the longest in Europe.

Six miles north of Heraklion is the delightful island of **Nisis Dhia**: this is where Daedalus and Icarus were imprisoned – according to legend anyway. There is a fairly well sheltered bay on the south side that makes an ideal night stop. We have found phosphorescence in the water here on one or two occasions and swimming in the dark yet glowing waters at night is a surreal experience.

Spinalonga Lagoon is guarded by the island of Spinalonga, home to both the ruins of an impressive Venetian fortress and, more recently, a leper colony. Victoria Hislop's very popular book *The Island* is set here. The lagoon itself is shallow (8m max) and very safe, although it can get gusty.

Agios Nikolaos and its fully-serviced marina is one of the jewels of the island. Built around a drowned sinkhole known locally as "the lake", the town still retains much of its former fishing port charm, even though it is an important cruise ship destination in summer. The excellent and very popular marina is the only "proper" one on the island. See www.marinaofaghiosnikolaos.gr

Sitia is also a former fishing port, now

the main ferry port for the east end of the island. The old harbour usually has space for several visiting yachts and it's a pretty place, yet with a slower pace of life.

On the eastern coast of Crete the sandy beach at **Vai** is famous for the pine forest that grows right up to the beach. It's not a particularly good place to anchor in a yacht however, and is best visited by land. The 1980s TV commercial for Bounty chocolate bars that appeared to be set in the Caribbean was actually filmed at Vai.

The large bay at **Kato Zakros** on the east coast is a safe anchorage in most weathers, although you can get strong gusts out of the nearby gorge. Ashore are the ruins of one of the major Minoan palace complexes, less extensive than Knossos, but you'll probably be the only ones there.

On the south coast the former fishing village of **Agia Galini** is not to be missed. Not only is it an attractive village set in the mouth of a small gorge but it has embraced tourism in a way that doesn't detract from the charm of the village. It also has the safest and largest port on the south coast and 30 years ago it's where we had our honeymoon.

On the south-west corner of Crete is the famous island and beach of **Elafonisi**. If you're in the area with a car you really must visit here. Sadly it's a terrible place to be in a yacht – the numerous above- and below-water rocks require a good offing and there are no suitable anchorages within reasonable dinghy distance either.

On the west coast the big bay at **Phlasarna** is very exposed to the prevailing north-westerly winds but on a calm day it makes an attractive lunchtime stop. The 3.5km of sandy beach would be jam-packed full of sunshades were it anywhere else, but although there is tourism here it's more subdued and not at all intrusive. There are the remains of a

Roman port and town nearby; the Roman harbour is now 6m above sea level, due to the tectonic uplifting of Crete.

Summary

I have heard it said that "Crete is not a place to be in a small yacht". Well, the hundreds of yachts that visit Crete every year, many of which spend the winter in the marina at Agios Nikolaos, would tell you otherwise.

You must pick your time to come (and your time to leave!) and you do need to keep a good eye on the weather while you're here, but Crete is a cornucopia of delights, both by land and by sea.



Tony Cross is the CA's HLR for Crete and author of a (free) pilot for Crete, which you can download from <https://goo.gl/pQtKtX>. Tony has been living aboard and cruising Greece and Turkey for 12 years and has wintered on Crete every year. He has visited almost everywhere on Crete that it's possible to take a yacht. He and his wife now live permanently ashore in Agios Nikolaos.



Calliope in Maupiti Lagoon in French Polynesia. Below, Sparkler en route to Scotland

CA London spring 2018 programme

Be inspired this spring! Lectures at CA House cover the Baltic, Brazil, Britain, Greece, the Pacific... and the story of communications

Wednesday February 7 'Allo, 'Allo: the Story of Communications, Jeremy Batch

To send a signal from your boat to the Moon was once thought more likely than reaching another ship below the horizon; talking to (let alone seeing) your granny on the other side of the Earth was definitely out.

We'll see how a combination of sums, styluses, soldering and stubbornness enabled Maxwell, Hertz, Marconi, Arthur C. Clarke, Julius Caesar and many others to predict, prove, build and strengthen the communication systems we now take for granted, taking us from flags and flares, semaphore and cyphers to VHF, SSB, G&T and GMDSS.

Including: how Brunel's Great Eastern began to spin the worldwide web, how "the tapes that span on silver wheels" (linked to the world's first electronic digital computers at BP) gave the go-ahead for the



Normandy landings, how a device that once posed a worrying threat to James Bond now helps put you through to Granny, and why every vessel should still carry a printed copy of the International Code of Signals.

Wednesday February 14 Sea Road to the Isles, Philip and Richard Crockatt

Philip and Richard will present episodes from the award-winning log of their 600 mile cruise in a Rustler 31 from Yarmouth, Isle of Wight, to Ardfern, in the Western Isles of Scotland during the summer of 2016. *Sparkler*, skippered by Philip, with several crews, visited the five kingdoms of England, Wales, Isle of Man, Ireland and Scotland. The focus will be on two

overnight passages, from Newlyn to Milford Haven, and Milford Haven to Holyhead, and the navigation required for the turning of important corners – Retirement, Lands End, St Davids Head, Holyhead, Meeting the Admiral, The Calf of Man, Donaghadee Sound, Mull of Kintyre, and the Crinan Canal. There will be photos, chartlets, and the amazing sound of Clive's Tibetan singing bowl, which, with Clive, sailed with Philip from Dartmouth to Holyhead. We hope to share experiences with CA members who have sailed the same waters. You can read an extract from Philip's log on page 40 of this issue of *Cruising*.

Wednesday February 21 Antigua to Auckland, Nicky and Charles Manby

Nicky and Charles participated in the Oyster World Rally from Antigua to Auckland between January and October 2017, on their 575 Calliope. The sailing had its moments with a broken gooseneck and genoa foil. Features include meeting the locals through holding eye clinics and dispensing glasses, awesome diving and snorkelling, and acting as supply ship to a remote Polynesian island.





Left, Tilman's Sea Breeze in ice. Below left, Awelina moored off the iconic Sugar Loaf mountain in Rio and John Brand catching a bus in the Baltic. Below, the Corinth Canal



Wednesday February 28 Cruising in Brazil, James Collier

James spent six months cruising in Brazil during 2016, including to Rio during the Olympic games. During his time there he got to grips with the peculiarities of checking in and out, laying up a boat in a customs bond and retrieving the boat afterwards, as well as cruising and replenishing in several of the most beautiful areas such as Bahia Ilha Grande, with its 365 islands, Salvador and Fernando de Noronha. He will speak about the place, why visit, what was nice and what less so, and recount experiences of encounters with fishing boats which make our home-grown lobster pots seem positively benign!



Wednesday March 7 Take time for the West Baltic, John Brand

John and Kyla Brand explored the Baltic coasts of Denmark and Germany in 2014, 2015 and 2017. This delightful cruising ground offers welcoming harbours, gentle scenery, pretty villages and historic cities, with sheltered waters and reliable winds. In this talk John will introduce the islands of the Danish Archipelago, with its sleepy towns and pastoral landscapes, and the German Baltic coast with the Schleswig Fiords, spectacular Hanseatic towns and the holiday islands of Rügen and Fehmarn. Some minor navigational challenges add extra interest, and the area amply repays anything from a few days nosing around to a full season's cruising.

Wednesday March 14 Travels with Tilman, Bob Comlay

Bob Comlay was one of only a handful of crew-members who returned for a second voyage with Bill Tilman, earning a level of trust that gives him unique

insight into the true character of this self-effacing legend of 20th century exploration. This illustrated talk will bring to life the experience of travelling with Tilman. Containing many unpublished photographs and letters, the talk offers a unique opportunity to gain awareness and understanding of this remarkable man, based on a friendship that endured until Tilman's loss at sea in 1977.



Wednesday March 21 The Aegean and the Corinth Canal, Keith Pettican

Keith's talk will illustrate the passage from the Aegean in the east to the Ionian in the west of mainland Greece, taking in three world heritage sites, as well as transiting the spectacular Corinth Canal.

Wednesday March 28 Hanson lecture

Details to come. Tickets at £18 include a buffet supper and must be booked in advance. Following the lecture, prizes will be presented to this year's log competition winners.

All events are held at CA House, 1 Northey Street, London, E14 8BT and start promptly at 7pm, unless otherwise stated.

To book places on any lecture, and to indicate whether you'll be ordering food, go to www.theca.org.uk/events/all and click on **Book Events Online**. Please pay on the door as usual. Any problems with the booking system, call or email Jeremy on 0207 537 2828 reception@theca.org.uk

Individual lecture tickets: Members £4; Non-members £7. Season tickets are available, contact the CA Office for details.

From passive to active

David Sadler and his wife Valerie have just retired from being joint secretaries of the Suffolk Section. In 40 years of belonging to the CA, they have gone from Passive, via Participative to Active membership

My interest in sailing started when I listened to Uncle Mac reading *Swallows and Amazons* on BBC Children's Hour. A First Class Aunt gave me a subscription to *Yachting Monthly* as a Christmas present. *YM* was then edited by Maurice Griffiths, so a life-time's love of the Thames Estuary was born.

Valerie stood beside me in church many years ago and promised to "love, honour and come sailing". In 1973 we were able to buy a boat of our own, *White Wytch*, a Guy Thomson T27, built for us in Burnham-on-Crouch and launched one day before VAT came into force. She was fast, low and wet. Sprayhoods had not been invented then.

We learned quickly and with three children under the age of 10, sailed to Poole and back and across the North Sea to the Netherlands several times, as well as getting to know the creeks and rivers of the Thames Estuary from our mooring close to Pin Mill.

The *CA Handbook* was our guide – at the time the only comprehensive pilot book available. It seemed to me that an organisation which produced such an excellent publication deserved support, so I joined the CA in 1977 and so began what might be called a period of Passive Membership. Valerie and I lived in the Midlands, had short holidays, were building careers and bringing up a young family, so although we enjoyed receiving CA news there was no opportunity for more active participation.

In 1980 we moved to Hertfordshire and were able to get to Ivory House, then the CA's headquarters, for occasional events,



becoming Participatory Members. Particularly memorable were talks by Libby Purves on their trip round Britain with a small family, and by Margaret Rule on the raising of the *Mary Rose*. Around this time we sold *White Wytch* and bought the Contessa 32* *Raffaella*. Well, we had to, didn't we, given my name? A lovely boat to sail, still fast, still wet, still no sprayhood. We continued to enjoy visits to the Netherlands, but also went down channel to the Channel Islands with the latest version of the *Handbook* on board.

Eventually the desire for home comforts aboard proved too strong and we bought the Rustler 36 *Spirit of Rosinis*. She is wonderfully seaworthy, comfortable at sea and in harbour with central heating, hot water, a shower, dry, a sprayhood, but still surprisingly fast.

By now most of our sailing was as a crew of two and in 2002 when we were able to give up work, "the curse of the sailing classes," we ventured further afield, visiting Brittany as well as spending time in local waters.

We were also able to move to our Active Phase of CA membership, volunteering to help with the Suffolk Section. We thought that this meant helping to stack the chairs after a meeting, but it turned out to be much more than that. However, as a result, we have made a large number of really super friends all around the country. Land Rallies with the Baltic and Med Sections have widened the circle of friends still further.

More recently I have become a Cruising Almanac Regional Editor and am now Chair of the Almanac Group – yet more friendships with like-minded sailors and a way to put something back into the Association which has been a part of my sailing life for so long. Being active in the CA is a wonderful way to keep skills from a working career alive, to develop new skills and to meet new people.

*The Contessa 32 was designed in 1970 by David Sadler (no relation). More than 750 were built.



Top right, David at the helm and above right, Valerie at the navigation table. Left, Spirit of Rosinis dressed overall for the departure of Nancy Blackett as she re-enacted We Didn't Mean to Go To Sea

