

## Solent & Chichester

2009 has seen some great Solent & Chichester events but with bad weather once again doing its best to interfere with our plans!

It does seem that we are beginning to see a pattern of better weather coming along much earlier in the year so I would like in 2010 to take advantage of the spring warmth and plan at least one event for April. I think also that it may be sensible to plan more events for the season so if any are cancelled we have more to fall back on. For example, having only six events planned then potentially losing two ( or more) to bad weather seems such a waste of opportunity.

Despite the weather I feel we have had a good season and many boats, some regulars and some new faces, have been joining in with the events and enjoying some great sailing and good fun. I have lost count of the number of times I promised scorching hot summer days for our trips but on the whole many days were warm (if not exactly scorching) and the sun cream was required occasionally.



The two midweek cruises proved to be very popular, one in the West Solent and the other in Mid Solent and I propose that we keep these in the timetable for next year. Just to balance things up I think we might include another, based in Chichester exploring all those tiny hidden creeks not usually included on the cruising itinerary. If this is timed for the school holiday period perhaps some of our grandchildren could be persuaded to join in?



Solent Cruise Week went amazingly well with 30 plus boats booked in despite some horrendous winds at the beginning of the week. The Chichester contingent bravely sailed through awful conditions to join the fleet at Cowes at the start of the week. A really good effort.

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Unfortunately our fellow Shrimpers from Poole, having to cross open water and get through Hurst ( never an easy task and sometimes highly dangerous in strong winds ) were unable to join us by sea but did support us by joining us for the BBQ at Beaulieu by car later in the week. We can only hope for better weather next year.

The fleet was only gale bound for one night at Beaulieu but plans were altered to accommodate and in the end the week still worked out really very well. Of the many highlights of the week, mention must be made of the a fish & chip supper at Northney marina, thankfully we were under cover in a marquee as there was an amazing downpour and electrical storm going on outside. We were delighted to discover that a few of the assembled members had the 'X factor' and we enjoyed a great evening of homespun entertainment put on by the newly formed 'entertainments' committee. We were further entertained at the final dinner by the reading of various poems, limericks, odes and other fine pieces of literary work penned by some of the assembled Shrimpers. All the items were the result of a competition to write the most entertaining piece on the theme of Solent Cruise Week. It was found to be impossible to select a winner, with all entries having considerable merit.

I think that this season many of our Solent & Chichester members have discovered some new delights of cruising within the safe waters of the Solent region. We have seen some new faces and made new friends. I sincerely hope that we can continue along the same lines in 2010 by encouraging participation in the rallies and enjoying our Shrimpers in the company of our fellow members.



By the time this report appears in the newsletter we will have had our October 'end of season' get together at Mercury marina. Hopefully some more new ideas will have been forthcoming for possible inclusion in next years itinerary. I will have seen many of you there but for those that could not make it I will look forward to seeing you on the water in 2010.

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