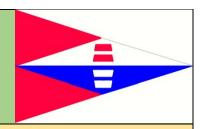
# theBEAMER

News from Port Edgar Yacht Club - November 2023



#### Hello, sailors l

Welcome to another edition of 'Beamer', the first we've really had since 2020, when the Covid-19 pandemic brought life to a shuddering halt. Our then-editor, Catherine Bryant, took the opportunity to step into a well-earned retirement, so our commodore, Linda Cooper, held the fort in the meantime with a couple of newsletters entitled 'Commodore Comms'. On discovering what I used to do for a living, Linda twisted my arm to give her a hand to revive 'Beamer', and this is my first bumbling effort. Some technical bugs mean it looks and feels a bit different, but we hope you like it - and if not, suggestions are welcome!

**Charlie Clark** 

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PICK OF THE PICS: An atmospheric photo of some close racing taken by PEYC member Dale Sandercock at the PEYC/PEWS 707 Sprints in September.

# Commodore's update

#### By Linda Cooper

It's been a busy year at the club, and we're delighted to have welcomed a lot of new members! Well done to those who've participated in club activities, and many thanks to all the volunteers who've made it possible!

Meanwhile, the winter is going to be busy for some of us: there might be less sailing, but there's a lot going on behind the scenes! Here's a brief update:

### PEYC development plan – didn't we do well?!

As a Royal Yachting Association (RYA)-affiliated club, we had to put forward a five-year development plan in 2019 for support and funding during the final stages of the new clubhouse build. We met the RYA Scotland development team recently, and dug out the original plan to see how we'd done. Much to our surprise, we'd more than achieved most of the original ambitious goals in the plan, despite all the setbacks with the clubhouse build and lockdowns etc!

In fact, the RYA response was: "Again, we just want to emphasise the huge step the club has managed to achieve against the development plan which was set up in 2019: something for you and all the members to be proud of."

Many thanks to the previous Commodore, Charlie Simpson, and the fantastic volunteer members who made that happen.

We intend to look at that 2019-2024 development plan more closely over the winter, highlighting our successes, and thinking about what gaps there are and what further development is needed. Then we need to work on a new plan for 2024-2029, for which we need your input. We will therefore be sending a survey to members in the spring.

Meanwhile the 2019-2024 plan is attached for you to have a look over. Light bedtime reading....!

### Rising membership adds to the buzz

We're also doing really well on the membership front. We had about 300 members before Covid-19 hit in 2020, but numbers dropped dramatically during the pandemic. However, it's now risen to about 380, contributing to a positive buzz about the club generally.

In addition, we now have three affiliated clubs: Queensferry Rowing Club, Edinburgh University Sailing Club (**EUSC – see article below**) and the Sea Cadets' Port Edgar Boat Station. We've also had requests for affiliation from the University of St. Andrews Sailing Club and the Port Edgar Dragon Boats.

The striking difference since Covid has been the increase in the total number and percentage of cruising members, who now comprise 39 per cent of the total. Perhaps the 'pay to play' club boat idea has been partially responsible, as well as a change in people's thoughts about lifestyle. We need to take these membership changes into account in our planning, and ensure that we involve all members in the process.

We also hope that some of the new cruising skippers will take that brave step of participating in the club's racing and/or cruising events, with club members as crew. Go on! Give it a go!

### Club boats: one out, one in, and one planned...

Nimrod has been sold. It had two successful years as our club yacht for mentoring sessions and hiring, and there are now 28 accredited helms. The mentoring sessions attracted new club members, who appreciated the opportunity to practise manoeuvres. However, the bilge keel and self-tacking jib were much less popular, so for these and other reasons (see the ICC item below), we've sold Nimrod and, happily, got the asking price. Well done, Geoff Bowerman, for facilitating this!

The plan is to buy another small yacht with a fin keel, traditional sail plan and nippier movement so that it can be used for practising racing manoeuvres and Division 3 racing, as well as general mentoring and hire sessions similar to those we offered on *Nimrod*. However, we need to ensure that there will be enough mentors to facilitate this, because the mentor numbers fell to only a very few with *Nimrod*. (See 'Your club needs you', below.)

Meanwhile, the club has been the lucky recipient of a generous gesture in the form of the keys to *EuRoBo*, a 33-foot RoNautica, which belongs to a member who is no longer able to sail. PEYC, under the supervision of Jock Blair, will carry out cleaning, repair and maintenance of *EuRoBo* over the winter, and prepare it for an early-April crane-in. Jock also intends to hold some weekend maintenance demonstrations for members: more information about these will be available later. *EuRoBo* will be available for mentoring sessions, and for hiring for cruising and Division 1 racing.

Our 707s, Apollo and Baltika, also had a successful season, with mentoring and hire, and will be available again next year.

We're planning a members' meeting about the club boats during the winter.

### International Certificate of Competence (ICC)

We've finally gained accreditation from the RYA for carrying out assessments for the ICC, which is the minimum evidence of competence required for hiring a yacht abroad. We also eventually managed to find a cruising instructor, Blair Scott, willing to carry out the assessments for us.

We then discovered that, under ICC rules, the assessments must be completed on a minimum 32-foot boat with a full sail plan, i.e., not one with a self-tacking jib. This was the initial trigger for our search for a bigger boat to replace *Nimrod*.

The upshot is that next year, members with appropriate skills will be able to hire *EuRoBo*, and separately book Blair at <a href="mailto:info@XPatSea.com">info@XPatSea.com</a> to carry out the ICC assessment.

### New group to liaise with marina management

A new network, Port Edgar Marina User Organisations and Tenants (PEMUOT), has been set up to facilitate better communications and working together in the marina. A first meeting with marina management was very useful, and sixmonthly meetings are planned, the next being in March 2024.

### Comings and goings ...



Steve Connelly (left), owner of Vela, has kindly volunteered to be cruising secretary, because Sandra Morrison has stepped down. Steve will attend committee meetings from the end of this sailing year until the AGM in February, and will help to organise the next year's cruising plan. Welcome, Steve, and many thanks for your contribution, Sandra!

Meanwhile, we have a new caterer for a trial period: Roz of Bold Bakes in South Queensferry.

### Your club needs you!

Our club is the great club it is, and runs as smoothly as it does, thanks to the selfless work of a small army of member volunteers. We're fortunate that the only people we have to pay are cleaners and caterers, which helps to keep our subs affordable.

A growing membership means we need more people to help behind the scenes. And even the most durable volunteers have to retire at some point for any of a variety of valid reasons, so there are sometimes vacancies. In fact we're looking for a few volunteers now, as follows:

**Club secretary & director -** Sadly, our secretary, Anne Hay, is stepping down next year. Anne has been an invaluable support to the committee for a long time. Anyone interested in the role is invited to contact her at <a href="mailto:peycsecretary@gmail.com">peycsecretary@gmail.com</a>.

We also need help with the **administration of membership lists and general communication.** This role could be shared between two or more people.

**Barman** - Our barman, Paul Morgan, could use a first mate. If someone from the cruising side in particular could help, it would be useful for cruising events and meetings.

**The Tuesday Club** – This wonderful group maintains and repairs the club boats and the clubhouse on Tuesday mornings. They could use some more pairs of hands, so if you like good craic while mucking about with tools and things, come along on a Tuesday morning and you'll receive a warm welcome......

**Club boat mentors** – We really do need more mentors for members who want to be accredited to skipper the club boats. Please contact Justin Ventors via <a href="mailto:peycwelcome@gmail.com">peycwelcome@gmail.com</a> for details.

So, if you think you could help the club in any of the above roles, please drop a line to <a href="mailto:peycwelcome@gmail.com">peycwelcome@gmail.com</a>, (FAO where appropriate the individual people identified above).

## Member's tip - mooring in strong winds

#### By Gordon Campion

Anchoring is easy in most conditions, but sometimes you have to pick up a mooring because regulations require it, or there's bad holding because of a rocky or weedy bottom, or some other reason. Moorings vary a lot, so look at the other moored boats to see how it is arranged and what you should catch on to. Do you need your own mooring rope or do you bring the buoy aboard?

So your mate's up front with a boat hook ready to catch the mooring, and you motor into the wind and up to the mooring, but cannot quite see it under the bow, so your mate's shouting instructions, but it's windy and you can't hear. You're going slowly now, but the bow blows off.

So you go around again, and again, and again... Finally your mate catches the mooring, but the bow blows off and they can't hold on - and you lose another boat hook. Sound familiar?

So, the best way to catch a mooring in windy conditions is to reverse into the wind and up to the mooring, catch the mooring at the back of the boat, loop your mooring rope around the mooring, and walk it to the front of the boat and tie off. The boat will turn around on its own to point into the wind.

### Recent events round-up

### Skippers' supper

The annual skippers' supper was held at the clubhouse on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November. It was a lively affair, with 46 racing skippers and crew attending.

Jim Scott presented a summary of the racing in 2023, and proposed some course changes for next year. This was followed by a convivial and useful debate.

#### Winter talks



Our first talk of the 2023-24 winter series was held on the 8<sup>th</sup> November, when Gordon Campion told us about his experience of sailing in Antarctica on the 70-foot steel expedition yacht, *Global Surveyor*. Gordon's presentation was fascinating, and superbly illustrated with amazing photographs and videos.

The following talks are scheduled through to March, but keep an eye on the <u>club</u> <u>website's winter talks page</u> to see what else might be added to the programme.

- Weds 17th Jan: Alan Kohler, 'Baltic Virgins'; and Frank Hay, 'The Briggers';
- Weds 21st Feb: Rhys Gorman (RYA), 'RYA initiatives and courses'; and James Bell from Gallagher Insurance;
- Weds 7th March: Martin Edge, 'Embrace the Rocks: Sailing the West Coast of Sweden'.

#### **Inaugural music night**



The club's inaugural music night was held one Friday in July. It was attended by about 25 enthusiasts from PEYC and the Royal Forth Yacht Club, which holds a music night every month.

Acoustic and electric guitars, a drum box, a saxophone, ukuleles, mandolins and a mouth organ all featured, while genres played and sung ranged from folk to country, pop and Scottish instrumental.

It was a great night, and the feedback was positive. Photos and video clips of the evening are on <a href="the-PEYC Facebook page">the PEYC Facebook page</a>. The only downside was the low turnout from PEYC members. We might host another one next year, and hope for a better turn-out of non-playing and PEYC members.

We have Dale Sandercock (pictured in harmony with Helen Horsfall of the Royal Forth) to thank for all his hard work to organise this event.

### Did you know...

... that our near neighbours at the marina, <u>Port Edgar Watersports</u> (<u>PEWS</u>), offer discounts to Port Edgar Yacht Club members on their many courses? So if you want to learn new skills, or improve your existing skills, in almost any aspect of sailing and boating, including radio use, first aid and engine maintenance, it might be worth checking them out.

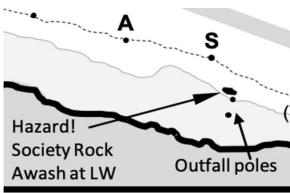
## Society Rock, and how to avoid it

By Jim Scott, sailing secretary

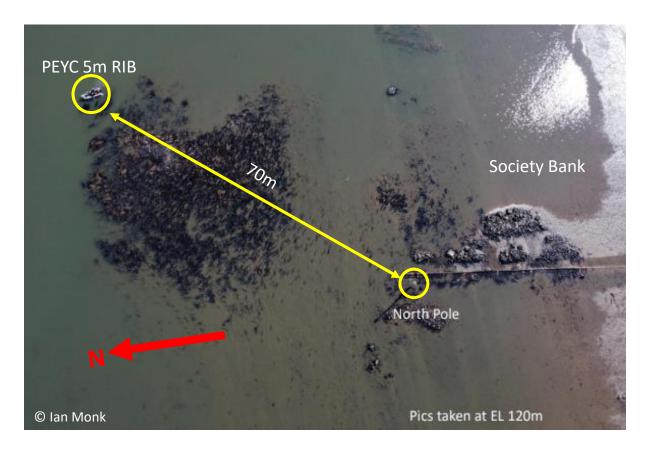
Society Rock lies just off Society Bank, about halfway between the Queensferry Crossing south tower and race mark S, close to the northern outfall marker pole. It's awash at low water springs, and is a considerable navigation hazard, having caused damage to several yachts over the years. Admiralty chart 737 only shows an isolated hazard about 100m NW of the marker pole, but a PEYC survey some 20 years ago found it to be more extensive and located directly north of the marker pole. A warning about it has been included on the PEYC race mark chart for years (below right), but the club wanted more-accurate information.



Admiralty Chart 737



**PEYC Race Mark Chart** 



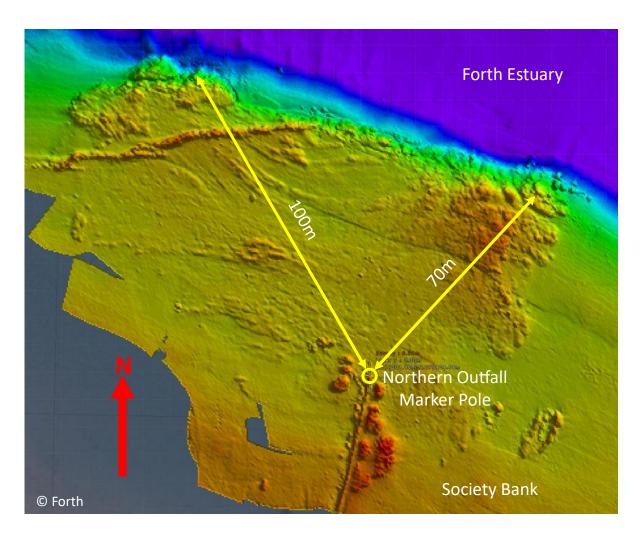
The rock was surveyed on 2<sup>nd</sup> Sept over the lowest tide of 2023 (0.05m at 11:15) using a drone flown from *Beamer* by Ian Monk of the Dunfermline Photographic Association, and a shore party landed from the PEYC RIB.

The drone image above shows the principal rock area awash when the tide is at chart datum, and there are additional outcrops 100m NNW of the outfall pole. Rock crests in the area start to appear as the tide height drops below 0.9m above chart datum.

Prompted by PEYC's concern, Forth Ports recently surveyed the area by sonar scan to create the bathymetric map below, which they have kindly shared with us.

It confirms the drone images, and provides even more detail. When NNW of the marker pole, you need to be more than 100m away to clear the reef.

Forth Ports has given the survey data to the UK Hydrographic Office, but it might be 18 months before it's on charts.



If there's enough water, you can certainly sail over Society Rock, but how do you judge when it's safe? The lower section of the north outfall marker is encased in a rectangular concrete jacket from which the cylindrical pole emerges. The lugs, with the remains of the original support cables, are about 2.8m above chart datum so if they're visible (right), there's less than 2m depth over the highest rock crest.

It would be ideal to mark the reef's edge, but doing so safely and reliably is a major challenge, given the tidal currents. A marker pole would have to be more 6m tall and, if it partially breaks, would create an extra hazard! There is a flat rock at chart datum, where the RIB is positioned in the drone photo, into which a 'raw-bolt' could be fitted to permanently anchor a marker buoy. However, we'll have to wait for another suitable tide, and they're very rare!





To avoid the reef with a margin of safety, you should pass offshore of the northern pole by the same distance as the outfall poles are spaced apart (about 150m).

A useful guide is the transit between the tall Rail Bridge viaduct column supporting the south end of the Queensferry cantilever, and the south tower of the Forth Road Bridge (left). If you can't see that viaduct column to the south of the Road Bridge towers as you pass the outfall poles in transit, you will be clear of Society Rock.

# Cruising from strength to strength

By Ian Cameron, cruising co-ordinator



A'CRUISING WE WILL GO: Looking happy to be heading out on the water again are these skippers and crew from the cruising section pictured in May just before the club's first Thursday cruise of 2023.

Picture: Linda Cooper

MANY people's perception is that as a club we focus mainly on racing. However, as Linda mentions in her column above, the cruising membership has grown significantly, and we've been pleased to welcome many new members.

Some still need to be reminded which way to push the tiller when they tack, while others have sailed oceans and competed in the Fastnet race. All are welcome, and the club is developing both as a forum for like-minded people and as a learning environment.

Although the biggest ongoing task is the organisation of crews for our Thursday evening cruises, there are many spin-offs from this that make it worthwhile. It is an opportunity for people to meet, plan and participate in activities on a larger stage. People who met on Thursday evenings have sailed North Sea passages together; competed in the Scottish Island Peaks Race; completed extensive delivery trips; and formed ownership syndicates on the Forth and the West of Scotland. Earlier this year some of our members enjoyed Hebridean cruises out of Croabh Haven thanks to contacts they made on Thursday evenings at PEYC.

For the first time since Covid we had an unrestricted start to the season. This year we started our Thursday sailing in early May and continued until the end of September. There has been a drift towards afternoon sailing, but in order to keep it as inclusive as possible we try to start at 6.00pm whenever possible.

Port Edgar being Port Edgar, we have to work around the tides. Every second week we end up with HW about 1600 and a massive ebb tide in the evening, usually accompanied by the prevailing westerly. It is hard for relatively slow cruising boats to make headway against wind and tide, and that, combined with anxiety about getting back on to berths at low water, means that many people prefer to sail in the afternoon. However, on alternate weeks and neap tides we start at 1800.

Getting to Granton Harbour by car seems pretty mundane, while sailing there feels like a small adventure.

One of the great joys of cruising sailing is to arrive somewhere by sea. Arriving at Granton Harbour by car or bus seems pretty mundane, while sailing there feels like a small adventure.

However, the weather this year was not particularly kind to our planned weekend flotilla-style 'cruises in company' to specific destinations, but there were some good trips.

Anchoring in Blackness Bay under the looming presence of the castle and enjoying the hospitality of the people at the local boat club never disappoints. The local club members always come out in their dory to ferry us ashore. It is possible to go alongside the stone jetty, or even to go onto the castle pier, although that's not for the faint hearted!

Aberdour Harbour is also an attractive and popular destination, and we had a successful trip there in September on one of the rare days when we had shorts and T-shirt conditions on the Forth. Some boats lay alongside the harbour wall, while others picked up moorings or anchored.

So, we have new members, new boats and a real feeling that PEYC is somewhere not only to go sailing, but to meet new friends and learn new skills.

What's not to like?

### A nautical ramble south to Amble

#### By Cath Coombs

Many PEYC members will know that *Artemis*, our twin-keeled Westerly Merlin, had a big adventure in 2022: a 400NM trip out of the Forth and hopping down the East Coast. My first mate, Edith, and I loved our stay in Amble, Northumberland in particular, so we decided to make it our home port for the 2023 sailing season.

This meant that *Artemis* was launched early this year, and the hunt was on for a reasonable weather window in March or early April to move it to Amble. After watching the weather forecast for five weeks, we finally identified Monday the 27th of March 2023 as a day that showed promise. Our first destination would be Eyemouth, a 50nm trip that would take about 11 to 12 hours.

There are only just enough daylight hours at the end of March for such a passage, but with high water at 7am in Port Edgar, the opportunity presented itself to use the six hours of ebbing tide to propel *Artemis* out. Light winds from the west were forecast for the upper Forth, and wind from the south in the outer Forth. The length of this passage is a challenge, with the potential for conditions to change significantly by the end of it. It's also a challenge because there are no good ports of refuge along the way: North Berwick and Dunbar are tidal and dry out.

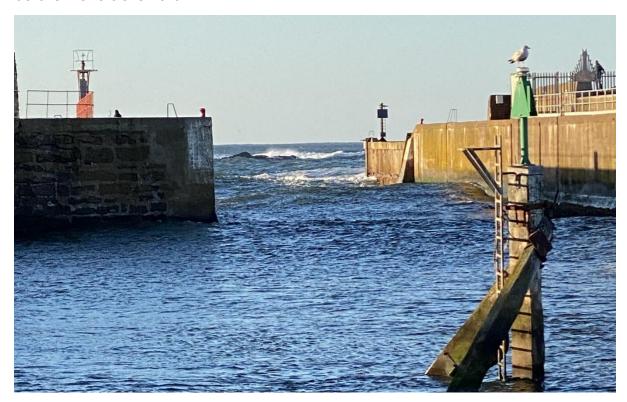


CHILLY START: Icicles on the sail cover at dawn as Artemis heads out of Port Edgar on the first leg of its passage. Pictures: Cath Coombs

So we were up at 5.45am. With droplets of hard ice on the sail cover and the temperature at -2, we were wrapped up well and had a hot water bottle on deck. We slipped *Artemis's* lines at first light. It was a beautiful sunrise: clear and crisp, but so cold! We saw our first puffins of 2023 as we passed Bass Rock. After Dunbar we picked up some swell from the north. (More on this later).

With 5nm to go we reached St Abbs Head, and encountered sea foam and a very confused sea as the tides met. Turning back was an option, but a nine-hour slog back up the Forth in the dark was not appealing.

As we approached Eyemouth it was clear that the forecast south wind had not built, and the north wind from previous days had created a significant swell. The waves were breaking on the shore, and Eyemouth Harbour took on the appearance of a boiling cauldron. Pilot books advise 'do not approach in strong onshore wind conditions', but we had made the decision on the basis of forecast southerlies before we left the Forth.



'ALL OF A SUDDEN, CALM WAS RESTORED!' A view from inside Eyemouth Harbour showing the tricky approach outside.

I clipped on when we were near to the north cardinal buoy, and managed to put out two lines and a couple of fenders. What followed was my most challenging harbour approach in more than 25 years of sailing! We held the leading line, but we were being tossed around, with rocks each side of us. We surfed through the canyon entrance on the storm surge, then all of a sudden calm was restored! If I was given nine sailing lives, I lost one of them in Eyemouth Harbour!

Well done to *Artemis*: a very sturdy 29-footer; and well done to First Mate Edith, who kept the orange marks of the leading line in sight in the most challenging swell, and didn't lose her head.

Harbour staff chat, and one of the staff there is also a lifeboat crew member. We learned that, due to the swell, the lifeboat crew had been put on standby the previous night as *Artemis* approached. Thankfully, they were not needed, but, yep, it was rough! Local knowledge says that it can take up to three days for the north swell to disappear, but this is not stated in the pilot book. If the south wind is weak it will not be enough to calm the conditions, and that's what happened to us.

We returned to Edinburgh by bus, and once again kept a keen eye on the forecast. We had learned to avoid northerly and easterly winds, and to let the swell decrease before attempting the next leg to Amble.

The day of the next leg came on Saturday the 15th of April, when we could see a settled weather window for moving *Artemis* from her temporary resting place in Eyemouth to her new mooring in Amble. There had been little opportunity before then, with constant moderate sea states and strong winds from the wrong directions. We had also aborted one attempt the previous week, which lasted 10 minutes before we headed back into Eyemouth because of the sea state.

It was a shock when we arrived at Eyemouth on the Friday: there had just been an hour of snow and hail and thunderstorms, and the deck and pontoon were covered. Brrr: yacht delivery in the spring!



Amble can only be accessed four hours each side of high water, and it's a 40-mile passage from Eyemouth, taking about nine hours. We set the alarm for 4.15am on Saturday to the make absolutely sure we could get up the river and not have to anchor at the entrance waiting for the next tide.

We prepped the boat the night before with slipping lines, and set off out the entrance before dawn (left), heading for the flashing northerly cardinal mark. We could just see the dark outline of pot buoys in the water, which is why we don't fancy too much night sailing on this coast.

Again, the sunrise was beautiful, and *Artemis* was visited by seals, dolphins and an assortment of sea birds, including gorgeous puffins, as we went past the Farne Islands. It was also great to see the RNLI out on manoeuvres as we passed Seahouses.

The Sun was shining as we approached the Amble entrance and proceeded up the river, and we were soon moored up in our new berth for the season!

### Affiliation - a great success story!

By Ollie MacLean, Commodore, Edinburgh University Sailing Club

The affiliation of <u>Edinburgh University Sailing Club</u> (EUSC) to PEYC has been a great thing for the university's sailing students. We've been participating in the 707 Wednesday evening racing, either by taking *Apollo* out with a student team, or sailing other boats.

This, as well as the Sunday racing, and even a few appearances by our members in the Saturday dinghy racing, was a great way for us to carry on sailing over the summer. Everyone who has come down has been warmly welcomed by PEYC members.



HAPPILY
AFFILIATED!
EUSC members
(left to right)
Ollie Maclean,
Angus Lawson,
Martin Cleary
and Franzi
Coldhill enjoy
an outing on
Apollo.

We took out more than 120 people during our two taster days during the university's Welcome Week in September, at the start of the academic year. Many had never tried sailing before. The conditions were perfect, with a moderate breeze on both days, and even some sunshine on the first day.

We held racing trials on the 16<sup>th</sup> of September, with more than 50 people trying out for our yacht and dinghy teams. A RIB-full of EUSC alumni helped to rank and choose the teams. We then towed our Firefly dinghies up to Loch Ore, where we completed day two, and where they will spend the winter.

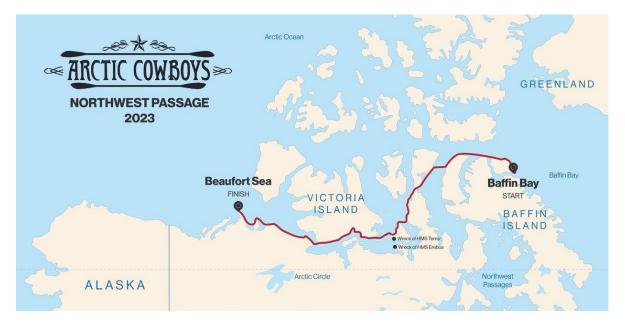
Both sets of events were a huge success for the club, but they could not have happened without the support of so many of the PEYC committee and members (too many to name). Everyone was helpful and accommodating, from coming down early to make sure we got in okay, to showing us all the kit and kitchen etc. We feel very lucky to have inherited this great affiliation!

We continued to sail out of Port Edgar well into the autumn. Our team has been competing in the 707 racing. We've been running casual sailing on Sundays using a couple of the PEYC dinghies, along with our Wayfarer, and sometimes a 707, to get our members on the water without the pressure of racing.

We look forward to a great finish to the season, and starting up again in the spring.

### Former member kayaks North-West Passage

Former PEYC junior member Mark Agnew has helped to set two world 'firsts' by kayaking the treacherous Northwest Passage across the north of Canada.



Mark, son of member Crispin Agnew, owner of *Pippa's Song*, was part of a four-person team who became the first to kayak the entire 1,600 miles of the route.

They were also the first people to complete the journey using only their own muscle power, rather than sails or engines.

It took Mark and his three American team-mates more than three months, starting from Baffin Bay, in eastern Canada on July the  $2^{nd}$ , and finising in the Beaufort Sea in the west on October the  $8^{th}$ .

During their odyssey they faced 15ft waves, became trapped in ice, and came face to face with a polar bear. They followed the route taken by Sir John Franklin, whose 1845 expedition ended in disaster with the loss of two ships and the deaths of all 129 men who took part.

Mark's long slog was only possible because much of the ice has melted since 1845.

"I can't believe we've done it," he told *The Sunday Times*. "Every single day was hard. When the weather was bad, it was tough. When the weather was good, we had to push our bodies to the max to take advantage of the conditions, covering ultra-marathon distances day after day."

Finally reaching the Beaufort Sea was an emotional experience: "I burst into tears and cried and cried", Mark said.

"The weather deteriorated at the end. Winter was coming and we were running out of time. We had to crack our frozen clothes in the morning to put them on," he said.

One experience he described as terrifying.

"Crossing the 45-mile wide Prince Regent inlet, we were trapped by ice. Although we were close to shore, we just couldn't escape its clutches. We were stuck.

"Suddenly, two massive chunks of ice changed direction — they were on a collision course, with us in between, and I was going to be crushed to death.

"Miraculously, instead, the pressure lifted us up. Suspended above the water, we heaved ourselves forward and dropped back into the water. I leaped out of the boat, hauled it up on to a flat ice floe and stood on the shifting ice, frozen, waiting for a gap to dash to shore. Eventually we made it." See the home-page picture at <a href="https://adventureagnew.com/">https://adventureagnew.com/</a> to see just how scary this must have been!

They also had a frightening close encounter with a polar bear: "One morning as we lay in our sleeping bags, we were wrenched from our sleepy daze by a low, guttural grunt. A polar bear was pressed against our tent, its head perfectly silhouetted against the tent. It looked like the Jurassic Park logo.

'All our attempts to scare the bear didn't work — it just stood there!'

"I grabbed the flare gun and fired it out the door, but the bear didn't move. I sprinted out of the tent barefoot in my PJs and shouted at the bear and threw stones as the others came to the tent.

"But all our attempts to scare the bear didn't work — it just stood there. We were running out of ideas. It was an amazing, but terrifying, encounter. Finally, the bear just turned and sauntered off.

"We'd already seen dozens of bears, but none had behaved like this, because all the others avoided us. So we kept an eye out, got ready, and paddled on."

The expedition raised £7,000 for <u>Wilderness Foundation UK</u>, a charity offering education and therapy for young people and adults to help them reconnect to society through outdoor adventures, therapy and mentoring.

Donations are still welcome, and Mark is available for speaking engagements.