

# OCEAN CRUISING CLUB

## **Press Information for Immediate Release**

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<http://www.oceancruisingclub.org/index.php/press-releases>

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10<sup>th</sup> January 2014

## **The Ocean Cruising Club announces recipients of the 2013 OCC Awards, including the new OCC Seamanship Award**

The Ocean Cruising Club (The OCC) has announced the recipients of the OCC Awards for 2013. Each year the OCC recognises the achievements of ordinary individuals doing extraordinary things on the world's oceans and brings those achievements to the attention of the sailing community at large.

The OCC Awards Sub-Committee made the announcement at the annual OCC London Boat Show dinner. This year, the recipient of the club's premier award for members, The Barton Cup, is **Jeanne Socrates**, who at the age of 70 is the oldest woman to circumnavigate the world solo, non-stop.

Two recipients share the OCC Award of Merit, an OCC award that recognises both members and non-members: **Herb Hilgenberg** and **Laura Dekker**. Herb assisted blue water sailors with ship-routing and weather advice for more than 25 years. Laura has shown the world that being the youngest circumnavigator was not derived from seeking fame and fortune but rather from a tremendous passion for sailing.

Commodore John Franklin added, "I congratulate all award recipients and nominees, and I thank all adventurous cruising sailors for inspiring new generations to reach for extraordinary goals." All winners are invited to attend the OCC Annual Dinner and Awards Ceremony on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2014 aboard *HQS Wellington* (Head Quarters Ship and home of the Honourable Company of Master Mariners) in London, where formal presentations of the awards will be made. The full stories will be presented on the night and published in the subsequent edition of *Flying Fish* (the journal of the Ocean Cruising Club).

# OCC Awards for 2013

This is the final list of OCC Award Winners (announced January 2014).  
Awards will be presented at the OCC Annual Awards Ceremony  
on board HQS *Wellington* in London  
on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2013

## *In Brief*

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- *OCC Award of Merit (2)* *Herb Hilgenberg*  
*Laura Dekker*
- *OCC Award* *Anne Hammick*
- *The Vasey Vase* *Jarlath Cunnane*
- *The Rose Medal* *Paul Heiney*
- *The Rambler Medal* *Richard Hudson*
- *The Jester Medal (2)* *Ewen Southby-Tailyour*  
*Trevor Leek*
- *The Australian Trophy* *Ian & Jo Johnstone, with children*  
*Gill and Keely*
- *Geoff Pack Memorial Award* *Skip Novak*
- *The David Wallis Trophy* *Chris Wilkie & Margaret Beasley*
- *The Water Music Trophy* *Duncan & Ria Briggs*
- *The Qualifier's Mug* *Emma Buckels*
- *The Port Officer Medal (4)* *Derrick Allen*  
*Dick Davidson*  
*Alfredo Lagos*  
*Ian Nicolson*
- *OCC Seamanship Award* *Dan Alonso*

## **The Barton Cup**

*The OCC's premier award, it recognises the most challenging voyage made by a member or members*



**Jeanne Socrates s/v *Nereida***

***For the solo, non-stop circumnavigation completed at age 70***

When 70-year-old British grandmother Jeanne Socrates sailed back into Victoria, British Columbia on 8 July 2013 she became the oldest woman to make a solo, non-stop, circumnavigation. It was not an achievement won easily, however – in fact there can be few hurdles, both personal and sailing, which Jeanne has not confronted and



overcome since she and her husband George crossed the Atlantic with the 1999 ARC rally in their Najad 361, *Nereida*. George was diagnosed with cancer in September 2001 and died the following March. Jeanne, a relative newcomer to sailing, decided to step into the role of skipper.

Jeanne (pronounced the French way) thoroughly deserves this award for her exceptionally brave and tenacious effort to complete this circumnavigation. In the words of a nominator, "Taken as a single voyage this solo, non-stop, circumnavigation by a lady who turned 70 while at sea must rank as one of the great sailing achievements of the 21st century. Taken as a progression over the ten years since Jeanne first sailed as skipper, it is unlikely ever to be equalled."

In 2006 Jeanne completed the Singlehanded Transpac Race from San Francisco to Hawaii, and the following year embarked on a two-year 'cruising' circumnavigation via the Pacific islands, Indian Ocean, South Africa and Panama. She was just 60 miles from closing the loop when her autopilot failed just before dawn on 19 June, and *Nereida* sailed herself onto an isolated beach on the west coast of Mexico. Although not seriously damaged, there was no tug or large fishing boat in the vicinity and over the course of several days *Nereida* became a total loss.

Jeanne quickly placed an order for *Nereida II*, a Najad 380. She took delivery in late summer 2009 and headed south. Her plan was to attempt a non-stop circumnavigation via all five Great Capes, raising sponsorship for Marie Curie Cancer Care. However, things went wrong almost from the start, with poor weather as she headed into the South Atlantic and a succession of gear failures (rigging, watermaker, etc) including the engine seizing up. This forced her to call in at Cape Town, where she discovered that water had got into all four cylinders and her brand new engine would have to be replaced. As soon as she was able Jeanne pushed on east then north through the Pacific and back to Victoria, British Columbia.

In October 2010 Jeanne set off on her second attempt at a non-stop circumnavigation. All went well until 5 January when *Nereida* was twice knocked down south of Cape Horn, sustaining damage including a broken boom and broken staysail furler, which saw her limping into Ushuaia, Argentina for repairs. With the non-stop element no longer a possibility, Jeanne made further stopovers at the Falkland Islands and Cape Town, but still achieved a circumnavigation of the Southern Ocean via the Five Great Capes. She then returned to Victoria, BC for another attempt at 'the big one'. (Jeanne gives a new meaning to the word 'perseverance'.)

*Nereida* left Victoria for the second time on 22 October 2012, rounding the Horn in relatively benign conditions on 7 January 2013. From there Jeanne continued across the South Atlantic, rounded the Cape of Good Hope, and headed back past Australia into the Pacific. She sailed back into Victoria late on 8 July 2013, more than 25,700 miles and 258 days (nearly half of them in the Southern Ocean) after leaving. The entire circumnavigation was made under sail, with no use of the engine.

Although the World Sailing Speed Record Council no longer ratifies claims based on 'human condition' such as age, they do award Performance Certificates from time to time, the recording conditions for which are as rigorous as those for a world record. These normally go to the skipper and yacht posting the initial speed for a route recognised as a world record course but which does not yet have a 'benchmark' time. As such, Jeanne and *Nereida* have received a Performance Certificate for the First Woman Singlehanded Around the World, Victoria BC to Victoria BC, Canada, with an official time of 258 days 14 hours 16 minutes and 36 seconds.

Further information: <http://www.svnereida.com/>

## **OCC Award of Merit**

*To a member or non-member for performing some outstanding voyage or achievement (may award more than one per year!)*

***Two have been awarded in 2014. Both go to non-members this year.***



**Herb Hilgenberg *Southbound II***

***For more than 25 years of dedicated service to safety at sea***

Herb Hilgenberg is a Canadian sailing enthusiast who, beginning in 1987, had provided a daily ship-routing/weather forecasting service for vessels at sea in Atlantic, Caribbean, Bahamian and adjacent waters. Herb's dedication to sharing his many years of experience as a weather router has been extraordinary. He has patiently and loyally guided many sailors on multiple Atlantic passages, all for no charge. Knowing Herb was going to be on board every afternoon, not only with the big weather picture but with specific advice for each vessel, was a great comfort to all who benefitted: invaluable fine tuning and reassurance for their own on board weather forecasting efforts. Indirectly, those who joined Herb made many friends on other boats sailing nearby by connecting on SSB after his net.

Herb, for whom this was a second OCC Award of Merit, was recently awarded a Meritorious Public Service Award by the United States Coast Guard who cited his "unique and reliable services". They estimated that Herb saved 100-150 mariners each year from unknowingly sailing into dangerous storm conditions. He bridged distress and overdue calls between the Rescue Coordination Centres and vessels, relaying messages between them at least 25 times per year.

Given the adventurous nature of the OCC's membership and the propensity to cross oceans in small boats, many Ocean Cruising Club members have benefitted greatly from Herb's sage advice over the years and we salute Herb who retired in 2013. "We cannot thank you enough for the more than 25 years of dedication to safety at sea via *Southbound II Coastal*," said Commodore John Franklin. "Although I personally will greatly miss your presence on board, the OCC wishes you every happiness in your next adventure."

For more information visit <http://www3.sympatico.ca/hehilgen/vax498.htm>.

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### **Laura Dekker s/v *Guppy***

***For her courage and determination in sailing 1.5 times around the world,  
all for the love of sailing***

Laura represents the absolute spirit of the blue water sailor and exemplifies the ideals of the OCC – to foster ocean cruising in small boats and seamanship in all its forms. Unlike others who have courted fame, it seems she simply always wanted to sail and to enjoy her private life, not unlike a young Bernard Moitessier.

In the words of a nominator, “Laura is a born sailor.” There is no denying her sailing, technical and navigational skills acquired at a very young age, nor her courage and determination in sailing 1.5 times around the world, defying all critics. As a 14-16 year-old, Laura circumnavigated singlehanded in 2012 without any mishap in *Guppy*, a 30-year-old moderately equipped 37-foot ketch, more than proving her seamanship.



Continuing on immediately afterward to complete another transpacific in 2013 to return to the country where she was born speaks to her love of the sea and the freedom of sailing. Laura truly reflects what the OCC is all about.

In the words of one judge, “I have ended up with the most extreme respect for this young woman, who, to my mind, is a true sailor in that she simply loves being at sea. She has rejected most publicity, has made no money from her trip, and did not even have a hand in the movie, except for supplying her footage. She overcame every challenge with her boat, quietly and professionally and showing great old-fashioned seamanship skills.”

Laura finished her circumnavigation in 2012 (Saint Martin, Dutch Antilles). She continued on across the Pacific, returning to New Zealand where she was born (she has dual New Zealand and Netherlands citizenship) early in 2013.

For more information: <http://www.lauradekker.nl/English/Home.html>

## **OCC Award**

*To a member or Port Officer Representative who has done most to “foster and encourage ocean cruising in small craft and the practice of seamanship and navigation in all branches”. This may include any invention, report, idea or action, which is calculated to promote the objects of the Club.*



**Anne Hammick s/v *Wrestler of Leigh***

***For a lifetime of fostering and encouraging ocean cruising  
in small craft***

In the minds of the subcommittee members, no one exemplifies this ideal better than Anne Hammick. In the words of a nominator, “she has done more than anyone else in the past two decades to foster and encourage ocean cruising and promote the objects of the Ocean Cruising Club.” Anne has edited the OCC journal, *Flying Fish*, since 1991, inspiring readers to see the places and share in the adventures described therein. Beyond that, she has made a major contribution to the safety and enjoyment of cruisers through editorship of RCC Piloting Foundation cruising guides.

As the author or co-author of numerous cruising guides including *Ocean Cruising on a Budget*, the *Atlantic Crossing Guide*, *The Baltic Sea*, *Atlantic Islands*, *Islas Baleares* and *Atlantic Spain and Portugal*, Anne has guided numerous sailors on adventurous journeys for decades. As a sailor, Anne Hammick has sailed offshore for over 20 years. Since her first Atlantic crossing in 1975, she has completed a further seven Atlantic passages, six as skipper/navigator.

# The Vasey Vase

*For a voyage of an unusual or exploratory nature made by a Club member*



**Jarlath Cunnane** *s/v Northabout*

## ***For the unusual and exploratory voyage through the White Sea Canal through Russia and around Scandinavia***

Jarlath and crew aboard *Northabout* set out from Westport, Ireland for a journey to St. Petersburg and through the Belomorsk Canal into the White Sea. *Northabout* logged over 4500 miles in this adventure. She passed through 6 canals and river systems en route, including 115 locks.

Partly because of the difficulty normally inherent in making this transit as Prime



Minister Putin had put severe restrictions on transit by any but government authorized transport vessels, few pleasure vessels have made this journey. In fact *Northabout* had planned to take that route after their successful transit of the Northeast Passage in 2004-2005 but were denied permission. As restrictions were somewhat eased, Jarlath made the decision to try again.

It was a most unusual journey to the Gulag Archipelago which included a visit to Sandermark, a burial ground where 7000 of Stalin's victims were laid to rest in mass graves. The canal itself, built by Gulag prisoners, was never the engineering marvel that Stalin envisioned. But it is a short cut that allows passage from the Baltic to the White Sea without the long journey through the Arctic Ocean. This voyage both unusual and exploratory is reflective of the spirit of the Vasey Vase.

Jarlath Cunnane, retired construction manager, boat builder and adventurer from Castlebar, County Mayo, Ireland, is currently building a new boat – [his biography is on the OCC website.](#)

## **The Rambler Medal**

*Awarded for the most challenging short voyage made by a member or members*



**Richard Hudson – s/v *Issuma***

***For a voyage through the Northwest Passage shorthanded***

The award recognizes Richard's 2011-2012 voyage through the Northwest Passage from Cartwright, Labrador to Victoria, B.C. in the 50 foot steel staysail schooner *Issuma*. Richard had to abandon an earlier attempt in 2010 when he almost lost the mast due to rigging failure in the Labrador Sea and had to return to Cartwright and then New York for repairs. *Issuma* left Cartwright on July 24, 2011 with a crew of two, one a Merchant Marine Officer and the other a 20-year-old from Victoria B.C.



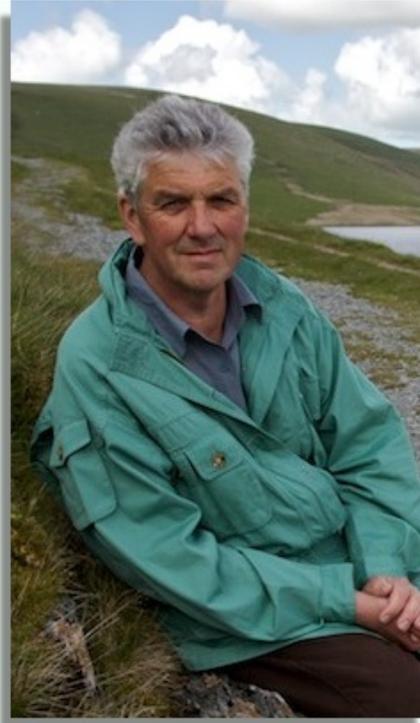
Although they were late in the season, having been held up for three weeks in Cartwright waiting for engine parts, the light ice conditions in 2011 allowed for a fast passage. They cleared into Canada at Cambridge Bay and made two more stops in the Canadian Arctic before rounding Cape Barrow and entering the Bering Sea. His crew left Richard in Kodiak and Richard sailed solo across the Gulf of Alaska to Yakutat, Alaska and then to Sitka where he spent the winter. In the spring Richard sailed solo down to Victoria arriving May 1, 2012 topping off the challenge with a voyage successfully completed.

The fact that he persevered in his quest and succeeded with a short-handed crew demonstrates his capabilities in the face of challenge.

<http://issuma.yachtblogs.com/>  
<http://www.sailblogs.com/member/rhudson/>

## The Rose Medal

*Awarded for the most challenging short-handed voyage made by a member or members. (NB: short-handed is normally defined as single- or double-handed)*



*Photo by Geoff Ward*

### **Paul Heiney s/v *Wild Song***

***In recognition of a two-year 18,000 mile voyage from Falmouth to Cape Horn and back***

Paul Heiney completed a two-year 18,000 mile voyage from Falmouth to Cape Horn and back. Particularly notable were the legs from Lanzarote to Salvador, Brazil and the tough 3000 miles from Piriapolis, Uruguay home to Dartmouth (with a mainsail ripped off the Azores) which he completed singlehanded. The leg from Piriapolis to the Beagle and Ushuaia was with only one, inexperienced, crewman. In other legs he had only two aboard. This short-handed effort demonstrates his skills and determination in surmounting the challenges of ocean voyaging.

Paul Heiney has been a radio broadcaster or television reporter in the United Kingdom for over thirty years. He has been sailing with his wife and Radio 4 presenter Libby Purves, a journalist with *Yachting Monthly*, for 30 years.

<http://www.sailblogs.com/member/wildsong/?show=profile>  
<http://www.paulheiney.com/>

## **The Jester Medal**

*For an outstanding contribution to the art of single-handed sailing by a member or non-member (awarded to two individuals this year)*

### **Lt. Col. Ewen Southby-Tailyour OBE**

***For his role as the driving force behind the Jester Challenge***



*Ewen Southby-Tailyour aboard his Black Velvet marking the start of the Jester Challenge*

It is without a doubt that Lieutenant Colonel Ewen Southby-Tailyour OBE embodies the spirit of the Jester Medal. Ewen was nominated for his role in managing the Jester Challenge, writing the biography of Blondie Hasler and inspiring many to sail long-distances in small boats for the first time. In fact, more than one nominator indicated that he is “the driving force” behind the Jester Challenge and has done much for the cause of singlehanded sailing, inspiring and encouraging many to attempt and achieve what they previously thought to be impossible. Ewan, in his unique and ever jocular way, has contributed greatly to its success and, by definition, to many individual success stories.

Ewan is an author, sailor, and retired Royal Marine Commando who served for 32



years in the Royal Marines specialising in amphibious vessels from all the NATO countries before retiring with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. A veteran of the Falklands War, Ewen went on to write several books on the commando’s point of view in conflict. Ewen went on to take over the responsibilities for the Jester Challenge, now a well-known and regular event in the sailing calendar.

The Jester Challenge is run on a ‘gentlemanly basis’ within the following guidelines:

- for sailing vessels between 20 and 30 feet (including multi-hulls)
- human power is the only acceptable alternative propulsion to that of the wind: rowing or clubhauling, for instance, are permissible
- single-handed to Newport Rhode Island
- one way

- stops allowed
- no time limit.

<http://www.jesterinfo.org/jesterchallengenotesno2.html>

## **Trevor Leek s/v *Jester***

***For his work on the Jester Challenge and for becoming the guardian of Jester***



*Jester (photo by Anne Hammick) and Trevor Leek (photo by Sandra Leek)*

Trevor embraces the spirit of the Jester Medal. Specifically, nominated for his role in the guardianship of *Jester*, the legendary blue water sailing vessel conceived by Blondie Hasler, and, together with Ewen Southby-Tailyour, in managing the Jester Challenge. Trevor and Ewen succeeded in preserving Blondie's idea of a transatlantic singlehanded race in its purest ideal. In so doing, he has inspired many to sail long-distances in small boats while introducing some to solo sailing for the first time.

Together with Sandra Leek, Trevor and Ewan succeeded in getting the Jester Challenge up and running as a platform for would-be adventurers to go into the open ocean and take on significant single-handed passages. The Jester Challenge has created a goal and opportunity for ordinary people to fulfil a life dream, encouraging amateur sailors to improve their experience, confidence, self-reliance and seamanship and, most importantly to do a great deal with not very much.

<http://www.jesterinfo.org/>

## **The Australian Trophy**

*Awarded for a meritorious voyage by an Australian member starting or finishing in Australia*



**Ian & Jo Johnstone, with children Gill and Keely,**  
***s/v Chaotic Harmony – for sailing “Rudderless at Sea”***

This award is presented in recognition of the Johnstone family for their “totally unplanned circumnavigation” from Brisbane to Brisbane as a family aboard *Chaotic Harmony*. Particularly notable is the account of a 2500 nm jury rigged passage after rudder loss mid-Pacific. The gripping account written for *Flying Fish* will appear in the next edition.

*Chaotic Harmony*, a 21 year old Catana 42 with a family of four, is on a sailing adventure to discover the known world. Ian Johnstone and Jo Grace are accompanied by their two children Gill (14) and Keely (11). *Chaotic Harmony* set sail from Cairns in March 2010 on a circumnavigation to show the kids that there is more to life than electronics, TV and the ubiquitous Xbox. Over the years, they have sailed



across the Top End of Australia, throughout Asia, the Indian Ocean and the Atlantic. They visited many countries and islands before heading through the Panama Canal in February 2013 to allow them to explore the islands of the Pacific Ocean. They have just returned to Brisbane, completing their circumnavigation, and will be land-based for a while ‘filling the kitty’ for more sailing adventures.

<http://www.sailblogs.com/member/chaoticharmony>

## **Geoff Pack Memorial Award**

*To a member or non-member who, by his or her writing, has done most to foster and encourage ocean cruising in small craft.*



### **Skip Novak – Pelagic Expeditions**

***For having exposed millions of ordinary people and sailors around the world to extreme adventure sailing through writing in books, magazines and newspapers plus appearance in film and video***

Through his writing in books, magazines and newspapers, plus appearances in TV and film, Skip Novak has become known as one of the world's most knowledgeable experts in extreme adventure sailing and has exposed millions of ordinary people, sailors and adventurers around the globe to ocean cruising. As the OCC members tend to skew toward the adventuresome group, he has helped to inspire and fuel their thirst for high latitude sailing as well as helping to improve safety under extreme conditions.

As a result of being at the most extreme and therefore newsworthy end of the spectrum, Skip runs a very successful business as Managing Director and Expedition Leader for Special Projects, Pelagic Expeditions: <http://www.pelagic.co.uk>

Skip Novak was born in Chicago in 1952. He is well known for his participation in four Whitbread Round the World Yacht Races since 1977. In that year, at the age of 25, he navigated the British cutter *Kings Legend* to second place. Novel entries followed skippering *Alaska Eagle* in 1981-1982, the first American entry; Simon LeBon's (rock group Duran Duran) *Drum* in 1985-1986, and *Fazisi* in 1989-1990, the first and last entry from the Soviet Union.

Skip Novak's books "One Watch at a Time" chronicled the *Drum* campaign and "Fazisi – The Joint Venture" told the epic story of the Soviets. His swansong from professional ocean racing was sailing over 50,000 miles on maxi multi-hulls over



three years including co-skippering the 110-foot maxi cat *Innovation Explorer* in the millennium non-stop around the world event, The Race, in 2001.

Skip is frequently asked to comment on high-latitude ocean sailing by radio, TV, internet and print media and is a regular contributor to many sailing magazines worldwide,

including several stints as a columnist for the Daily Telegraph in London.

Skip recently returned from the UK launching of a 12-part online video and hard copy series in the October issue of *Yachting World* magazine - "Skip Novak's Storm Sailing Techniques." This was filmed at Cape Horn last January with the editorial team of the magazine and this first instalment also has an eight page feature on the project [View PDF of these articles here >>](#).

Skip sits on the panel of experts that vets expeditions to South Georgia on behalf of the South Georgia government. He is also on the executive committee of IAATO (International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators).

A keen amateur mountaineer, having climbed internationally with several first ascents, he followed in the explorer-sailor Bill Tillman's wake when he built the expedition yacht *Pelagic* in Southampton in 1987 and has been south every season since. Skip now makes his home with wife Elena in Hout Bay, South Africa

## **David Wallis Trophy**

*For the most valuable contribution to 'Flying Fish'.  
The recipient is nominated by the Editorial Sub-Committee*

### **Chris Wilkie and Margaret Beasley**

***For 'How to Tame your Storm Jib'***

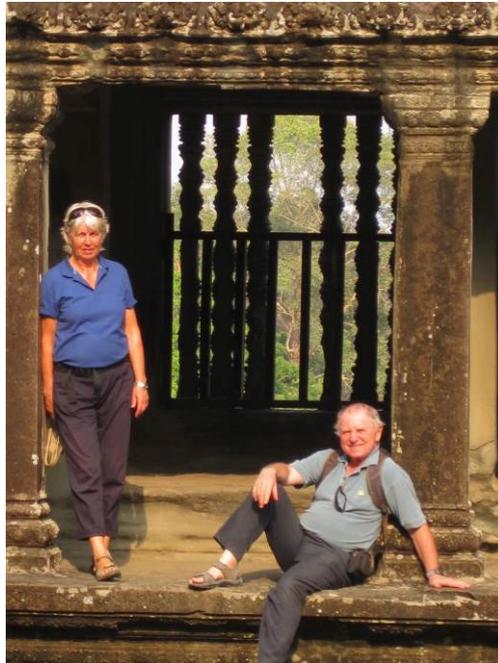


The crew of *Storm Bay of Hobart* discovered that deploying a storm jib safely under adverse sea conditions and high winds requires some forward planning and plenty of practice. Their experience stems from having to deploy it under estimated Force 9 conditions. After the sail bag filled with air and the shackle and piston hanks proved there were not enough hands to hold on and deploy the sail at the same time, they vowed to redesign their storm jib for deployment during storms. Their article "*How to Tame Your Storm Jib*" was well thought out and presented valuable information that could contribute to the safety of our members under challenging conditions.

Chris and Margie have been cruising out of their home port of Hobart, Tasmania for eleven years aboard their 40ft Alan Payne-designed *Skookum, Storm Bay of Hobart*, covering over 45,000 miles in that time. They have taken the course least travelled, sailing via New Zealand and Micronesia to Japan, where they cruised for 18 months before heading northeast along the Aleutians to winter on Kodiak Island, Alaska. They are currently in Chile, where they hope to spend a couple of seasons, after a summer in Mexico and a passage via the Galapagos and Easter Island

## **The Water Music Trophy**

*To a member who has contributed most to the Club by way of providing cruising information, navigation and pilotage.*



### **Duncan & Ria Briggs – Sea Topaz**

***For sharing valuable navigation information about Sulawesi in print and online***

Throughout the eight years that Ria and Duncan have been cruising on their steel Callisto 435 cutter, *Sea Topaz*, they have always flown their OCC burgee, have made many friends, and have shared their experiences and pilotage information with the members of the OCC. Most recently, they have written in detail about cruising Sulawesi, providing descriptions and co-ordinates of many of the harbours and anchorages. Further information about many of these places they posted in the Anchorage Notes for Sulawesi on the Cruising Information Community website.

They started their journey in Turkey, then headed west, crossed the Atlantic and Pacific, and are for the immediate future based in Malaysia, old stomping grounds as Duncan served in the Far East and Nepal with the Gurkhas.

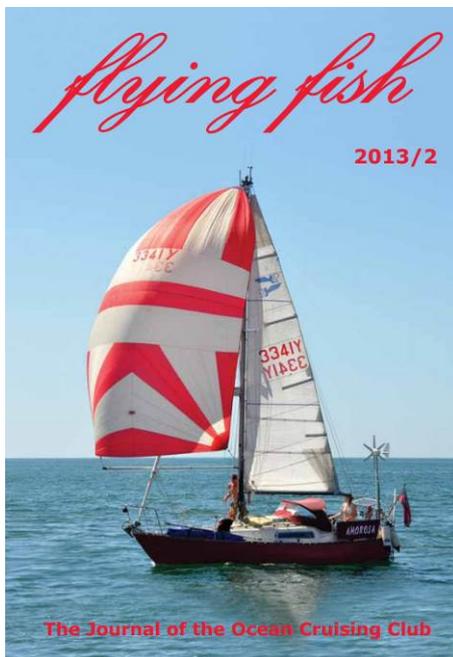
Their adventures can be followed on their blog at <http://blog.mailasail.com/seatopaz>.

## **The Qualifier's Mug**

*For the most ambitious or arduous qualifying voyage by a new member as submitted for publication in the OCC journal, "Flying Fish" or in the OCC Newsletter. Members of the OCC are required to qualify for membership by completing a passage of not less than 1000nm non-stop in a craft of less than 70'*



**Emma Buckels – s/v Amorosa**  
***For qualifying in a 25-foot boat with Youth Sponsorship***



Not only did Associate Member Emma Buckels set out to qualify as a Full Member aboard her own vessel, *Amorosa*, a Sadler 25 which she first had to refit, but she also thought laterally and asked for the Youth Bursary to be applied to her qualifying journey. With her friend Stuart, also new to ocean voyaging, she proceeded to successfully cross the Atlantic to the Caribbean and return home to the UK thereby achieving the transition from Associate to Full Member. Her story is chronicled in *Small Boat, Big Adventure* due to appear in the next issue of *Flying Fish*.

Amorosa off the Portuguese coast.  
Photo Fiona and Iain Lewis aboard Ruffian.

## **The Port Officer Medal**

*For the most outstanding contribution from a Port Officer*

**Derrick Allen** – Harwich, UK 1962  
**Dick Davidson** – Dover, UK 1956  
**Alfredo Lagos** – Bayonna, Spain 1954  
**Ian Nicolson** – Argyll, Clyde, UK 1959

***These four men have each been Port Officers for more than 50 years***

The OCC Port Officer Network covers the entire world and is an invaluable benefit for members wherever they may be sailing. In this the OCC's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year, we have chosen to recognize four Port Officers, each one of whom has been in the post of Port Officer and welcoming OCC members to their home ports for more than 50 years.



*Alfredo Lagos, Port Officer, Bayona Spain, since the inception of OCC in 1954*



*Ian Nicolson, Port Officer, Argyll, Clyde, UK since 1959*

# **The OCC Seamanship Medal**

*Open to members and non-members to recognise  
exceptional feats or acts of seamanship*

*This is a new award for 2014, endowed and presented by Commodore John Franklin.*



**Dan Alonso – s/v *Halcyon***

## ***For the rescue of Jan Steyn off Solid Air in the 2013 Bermuda 1-2 Race***

Who can possibly argue with the fact that Dan Alonso is thoroughly deserving of this award for his exceptionally brave and skilled rescue of Jan Steyn off *Solid Air* in the 2013 Bermuda 1-2. His account of the ordeal in *Flying Fish* and elsewhere was riveting and demonstrates extraordinary seamanship under difficult conditions. We cannot think of a better example with which to launch this important new award. Well done!

Dan and his girlfriend Kathy have owned *Halcyon*, a Hallberg Rassy 49, for nearly four years and have covered 15,000 miles in that time – despite living in Cheyenne, Wyoming! Their first race with *Halcyon* was the 2011 Charleston to Bermuda Race, and their ‘summer of races’ in 2013 was Kathy’s 50th birthday present to Dan – three months aboard *Halcyon*, four ocean races and 3400 miles of sailing. Quite some birthday present! An ex-wrestler, Dan decided to use the races as motivation to get back into top physical condition, and to challenge himself by doing the races back to back, with the passages in between – Charleston to Bermuda, Bermuda to Newport, Newport to Bermuda, Bermuda to Newport, Newport to Marblehead, Marblehead to Halifax and Halifax to Portland, Maine. The rescue of Jan Steyn took place on the outward leg of this year’s Bermuda 1-2 Race, organised by the Newport Yacht Club.



***Jan Steyn with Dan Alonso***

# About the Ocean Cruising Club



The Ocean Cruising Club exists to encourage long-distance sailing in small boats. Every full member has made a 1,000-nautical mile offshore passage port-to-port in a vessel of 70 feet or less; associate members are committed to the achievement of that goal. This standard distinguishes the OCC from all other sailing clubs. It's not about what you are or who you know, but simply what you have done, that matters. Our membership as a whole has more experience offshore than any other sailing organisation – in the number of circumnavigators, in the range of extraordinary voyages members have completed, and in the number of solo sailors, and female sailors among our ranks. This is what sets us apart from other organisations, even as it draws us together as a group. We bring the spirit of seafaring to our association by always being willing to assist any fellow sailor we meet, either afloat or ashore.

With a central office in the UK, though it has no physical clubhouse, the OCC is, in a way, the “home port” for all of us who have sailed long distances across big oceans. With 48 nationalities and Port Officers in as many countries, we have a more diverse membership and a more international reach than any other sailing organisation. Our Port Officers and Regional Rear Commodores represent the frontline interaction with our existing members and the recruitment of new members.

## Recognition of Achievement

As members, we fly the “Flying Fish” burgee to celebrate our own accomplishments and recognise fellow members. As an organisation, we promote the achievements of our overall membership so that the Club will be recognised as the pre-eminent offshore sailing organisation in the world, with a unique body of knowledge, experience and expertise. We publish a record of member's voyages in the “*Flying Fish*” journal to commemorate their achievements and to provide information to all who are interested in voyages in small craft over the navigable waters of the world.

Through our OCC Annual Awards, we recognise exceptional sailing achievement wherever we find it, inside and outside the Club.

The OCC Awards are announced annually at the London Boat Show and presented to recipients at the Annual Dinner associated with the OCC AGM in the Spring. Qualified nominations are submitted by OCC members. Selections are made by the OCC Awards Sub-Committee and approved by the Committee and Board. [Prior recipients of the OCC Awards are listed on the OCC website.](#)

For more information about awards or membership, please visit our website at <http://www.oceancruisingclub.org/> where you can also visit the OCC Forum or peruse back issues of *Flying Fish*.

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