

Rochester Oyster and Floating Fishery

A Charter granted to the City of Rochester by Henry VI in 1446 first conferred the title of "Admiral of the Waters of the Medway from Sherenesse to Hawkewode".

In 1728 in the reign of King George II, an Act of Parliament was passed for "regulating, well ordering, governing and improving the Oyster Fishery in the River Medway and waters thereof, under the authority of the Mayor and Citizens of the City of Rochester, in the County of Kent." This act was followed By another, passed in the 28th year of the reign of Queen Victoria, entitled "An Act for Better Regulating the Rochester Oyster Fishery and for other Purposes."

By these and subsequent Acts of Parliament, the Mayor of the City of Rochester as Admiral of the waters of the Medway, and his Aldermen were given jurisdiction over the waters of the Medway and its creeks and tributaries between Garrison Point, Sheerness and Hawkwood Stone.

The Oyster Fishery was free and common to all oyster fishermen and dredgers who had served seven years apprenticeship with any free fisherman or free dredger of the fishery. Upon application by the Fishery, the Mayor summoned an Admiralty Court for regulating and ordering the Fishery. The fishermen and dredgers were summoned by the Mayor's Water Bailiff to attend the Court when a Jury was elected.

There is much documentary evidence that bears witness to the history and purposes of the floating and oyster fisheries and The Admiralty Court is still held today on the first or second Saturday in July with the Admiral of the River (The Mayor of Medway, as the successor to the Mayor of Rochester), a number of Councillors fully robed, the Chief Executive of the Borough of Medway (as successor to the Town Clerk of Rochester) as Registrar of the Fishery and other Dignitaries in attendance. The Jury is sworn and appointed, the list of Free Dredgers is called, the Water Bailiffs are sworn and appointed and the Jury, through the Chamberlain, presents its report on the previous years fishing in the River Medway, which is then approved by the Court.

The "Bulwark" Tragedy

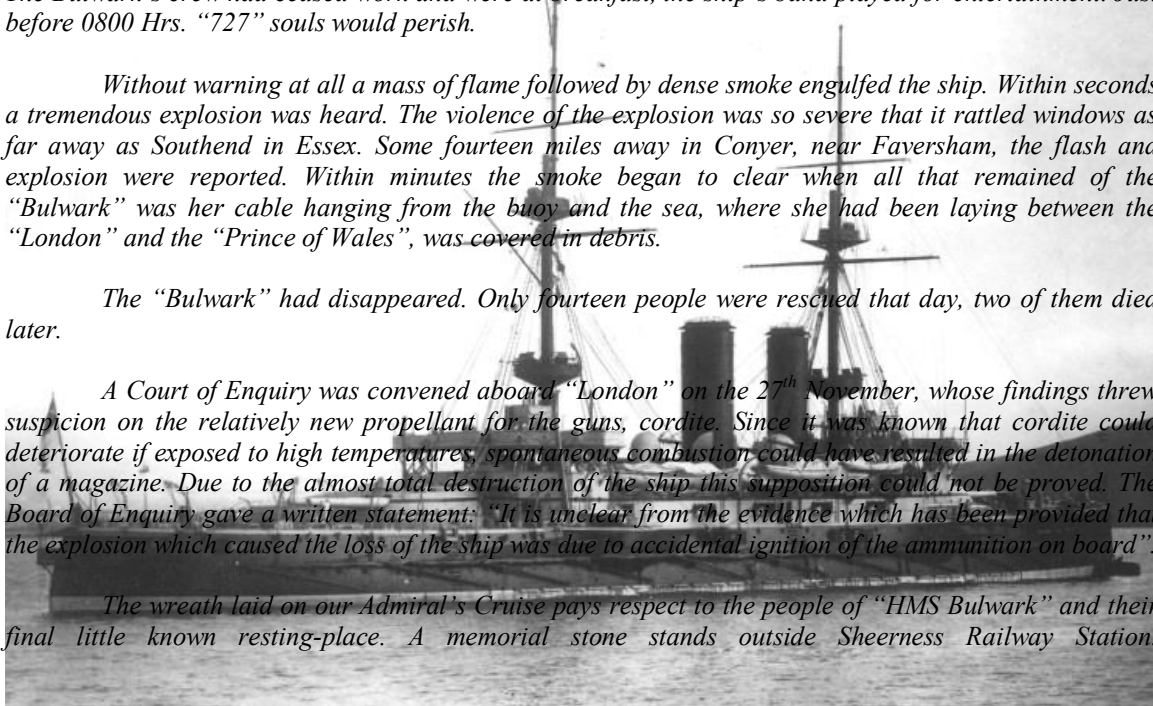
Early morning of the 26th November 1914 a group of Battleships including the "Bulwark" lay to their buoys in peaceful ignorance of the event that was about to tragically happen in Kethole Reach. The Bulwark's crew had ceased work and were at breakfast, the ship's band played for entertainment. Just before 0800 Hrs. "727" souls would perish.

Without warning at all a mass of flame followed by dense smoke engulfed the ship. Within seconds a tremendous explosion was heard. The violence of the explosion was so severe that it rattled windows as far away as Southend in Essex. Some fourteen miles away in Conyer, near Faversham, the flash and explosion were reported. Within minutes the smoke began to clear when all that remained of the "Bulwark" was her cable hanging from the buoy and the sea, where she had been laying between the "London" and the "Prince of Wales", was covered in debris.

The "Bulwark" had disappeared. Only fourteen people were rescued that day, two of them died later.

A Court of Enquiry was convened aboard "London" on the 27th November, whose findings threw suspicion on the relatively new propellant for the guns, cordite. Since it was known that cordite could deteriorate if exposed to high temperatures, spontaneous combustion could have resulted in the detonation of a magazine. Due to the almost total destruction of the ship this supposition could not be proved. The Board of Enquiry gave a written statement: "It is unclear from the evidence which has been provided that the explosion which caused the loss of the ship was due to accidental ignition of the ammunition on board".

The wreath laid on our Admiral's Cruise pays respect to the people of "HMS Bulwark" and their final little known resting-place. A memorial stone stands outside Sheerness Railway Station.



ROCHESTER CRUISING CLUB FORMED 1905

Rochester Cruising Club has occupied its present location since its formation in 1905. The first Commodore of the Club was Richard Wadhams, a Foreman Barge Builder, who worked for a local boatyard and is remembered for his part in constructing the "Susannah". She was reputedly the largest Bawley ever built on the River Medway.

In its early days, the club members congregated on a number of disused barges moored adjacent to what is now the Esplanade, until in 1937 members erected a shore based Clubhouse on land leased from the City of Rochester Council. This facility survived the damage inflicted during the Second World War up until 1974, when a new Clubhouse was officially opened.

2005 saw the official opening of an enlarged and modernised Clubhouse, which is capable of supporting a range of social activities for its ever-increasing membership. Pontoon moorings complete with electricity and water services, plus a Fuel Facility and Scrubbing Berth have been provided for the use of members.

Throughout its history, Rochester Cruising Club has maintained close links with the local community and Council, and in the past, many members of the Club were also members of the Council. It was in 1960 that the then Mayor of Rochester and Admiral of the River, Councillor Jack Phillips, sought the assistance of Alderman Maurice Cole, a Club member, in re instating the old custom of the beating of the Admiral's bounds, from the Hawkwood Stone to Sheerness. This event, The Admiral's Cruise was to forge a close relationship between Council and Club, which has stood the test of time to the present day.

The event has attracted the participation of many local Clubs and organisations, and the Admiral of the River distributes commemorative pennants to participating vessels during the cruise downriver. On the eve of the cruise, Rochester Cruising Club has hosted a dance in the Clubhouse and a reception on completion of the cruise the following day, together with the traditional Sunset Ceremony. 1973 saw the last Admiral's Cruise under the powers granted to the City of Rochester and was marked by a Fly Past of 18 aircraft, which had been participating in the Rochester Air Show. The Admiral's Cruise of 1980 turned out to be a memorable occasion, as it involved the Lord Mayor of London, Sir Peter Gadsdon, who also enjoyed certain powers on the River Medway as far up as Upnor. The Admiral of the River, Councillor G.D. Wickinson, embarked upon the "Arctic", skippered by Ken Tierney, met up with the Lord Mayor, aboard "Medway Surveyor" in Long Reach for the ceremony at Upnor and then both vessels and the assembled fleet made their way upriver to Rochester Cruising Club for the reception. 1992 introduced another change to the arrangements of the Cruise. Hitherto, when returning the salute from the Admiral's Barge, only one "authorised person" was required to man the cannon! New legislation dictated that a second person was required to man the cannon, and so a Gunners Mate was appointed and added to the crew list.

For over 58 years, the ceremony of the Beating of the Bounds by the Admiral of the River Medway has been celebrated and enjoyed by many. Rochester Cruising Club looks forward to hosting many more Admiral's Cruise dances and receptions in the years to come.

THE BOROUGH OF MEDWAY

ADMIRAL'S CRUISE OF THE RIVER MEDWAY 2019 59th Year

(Organised by the Rochester Cruising Club)

SATURDAY 29th June and SUNDAY 30th June

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On behalf of Councillor Habib Tejan, the Admiral of the River Medway, the Deputy Mayor of Medway, Councillor Steve Iles, will cruise those parts of the River Medway, which lie within the Admiral's jurisdiction.

The following is an outline of the programme: -

PART 1

Saturday 29th June

HW Chatham 10.39 BST

HW Hawkwood Stone 11.37 BST

- 10.15 The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Steve Iles and the Principal Water Bailiff, Dean Caston, will arrive at The Rochester Cruising Club (RCC) on The Esplanade to be greeted by the Commodore and Officers of the Rochester Cruising Club.

The Deputy Mayor may wish to change his attire at the Club House.

- 10.40 The Deputy Mayor will be escorted to MY 'Polar Ice', skippered by Mr Terry Morgan, which will act as Admiral's Barge.

- 10.55 The Admiral's Barge will slip moorings and form-up in convoy with the Escort Vessels and other boats before lying off STROOD YACHT CLUB.

- 11.00 The Bugler aboard the Admiral's Barge will sound the 'ALERT'. The Commodore and Officers of STROOD YACHT CLUB, aboard their respective vessels will greet the Admiral and join the convoy. The Bugler will sound the 'CARRY ON' and the Convoy will proceed up river.

- 11.10 The Admiral's Barge will lay off MEDWAY BRIDGE MARINA. The bugler will sound the 'ALERT' and greetings will be exchanged and the Convoy will proceed up river.

- 11.15 The Admiral's Barge will lay off PORT MEDWAY MARINA. The Commodore and Officers of MEDWAY MOTOR YACHT CLUB aboard their respective vessels will greet the Admiral and join the convoy. The Bugler will sound the 'CARRY ON' and the convoy will proceed up river.

- 11.20 The Admiral's Barge will lay off CUXTON MARINA. The Bugler will sound the 'ALERT' and greetings will be exchanged. The Bugler will then sound the 'CARRY ON' and the convoy will proceed up river.

- 11.23 The Admiral's Barge will lay off THE KENT BOAT AND SKI CLUB. The Bugler will sound the 'ALERT'. The Commodore and Officers of the Kent Boat and Ski Club will

exchange greetings with the Admiral and join the convoy. The Bugler will sound the ðCARRY ONö and the convoy will proceed up river.

- 11.30 As the Admiral's Barge approaches ELMHAVEN MARINA, the Bugler will sound the ðALERTö and greetings will be exchanged with Officers and Members of ELMHAVEN MOTOR YACHT CLUB as the convoy passes. On clearing the end of the pontoons, the Bugler will sound the ðCARRY ONö and the convoy will proceed up river.
- 12.05 The Convoy arrives at the Hawkwood Stone and the Admiral's Representative will then fire cannon to mark the limit of the Admiral's jurisdiction up river. The Bugler will sound the ðCARRY ONö and the convoy will return to Rochester.
- 13.00 Arrive back at RCC. Secure Admiral's Barge and disembarks the Deputy Mayor. Escort Vessels to take up their moorings.
- 13.30 Invited guests and those who participated in the cruise will proceed up to RCC Clubhouse. Rochester Oyster and Floating Fishery and their Chamberlain Shane Hales will host a reception.

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- 19.00 Admiral's Cruise BBQ (Cost £8.50 per person including a sweet) with entertainment provided by Marvellous Mo and the Black Line Ferrets at the Clubhouse, where all will be made welcome.**

ADMIRAL'S CRUISE OF THE RIVER MEDWAY 2019

59th Year

IN ORDER TO ENSURE A SUCCESSFUL CRUISE IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE TIMETABLE AND CRUISING ORDER PLAN ARE STRICTLY OBSERVED BY ALL PARTICIPATING VESSELS. YOUR CO-OPERATION IN ACHIEVING THIS WILL BE APPRECIATED.

IN THE EVENT OF BAD WEATHER, ALTERATIONS TO THE CRUISE PLAN MAY BE MADE. THIS WILL BE ADVISED ON VHF CHANNEL 8 AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE CRUISE OR AS CONDITIONS DICTATE

At no time should the convoy's speed exceed 6 Knots above Folly Point and 8 Knots below. All vessels should monitor Medway VTS VHF Ch. 74 for traffic movements in the River.

PART 2

Sunday 30th June

HW Chatham 11.34 BST

LW Chatham 17.35 BST

HW Sheerness 10.27 BST

LW Sheerness 17.22 BST

Communications between all vessels and the Admiral's Barge should be on VHF Ch. 8

- 09.50 Rochester Cruising Club (RCC) Officers and Committee, with Partners, will line up on the RCC Patio, flanked by the Medway Town Sea Cadets to await the Admiral.
- 10.00 The Mayor, Admiral of the River Medway, Councillor Habib Tejan arrives at RCC and is joined by the Principal Water Bailiff, Dean Caston and Official Guests. After being greeted by the Commodore, John Rufford and Officers of the Club the Admiral will then proceed to MY ðPolar Iceö, skippered by Mr Terry Morgan, which will act as Admiral's Barge and be piped aboard by the Medway Town Sea Cadets.
- 10.15 MV ðMopsö with Piper and Sea Cadets will cast off from Rochester Cruising Club and proceed to the Bulwark Buoy at Kethole Reach.
- 10.30 Convoy of Official supporting craft will form up in TOWER REACH as per plan provided to the Skippers.

All other vessels should remain on their moorings or hove-to up river of Tower Reach until the Official Convoy is under way. The back marker of the Admiral's Convoy will be MY "True Spirit". This vessel will therefore also form the vanguard of the main convoy when underway. All other Vessels are required to stay behind the Official Convoy. The back marker for the RCC Boats will be MY "Ballerina" flying a Rear Commodore's Burgee, which will also act as lead boat for vessels from all other invited clubs and/or participants.

- 10.30 The Admiral will give permission on **Channel 8** to Dress Overall whilst under way.
- 10:35 The Admiral's Barge will slip moorings and take up position at the head of the Convoy, before leading the convoy down stream.
- 10:55 CHATHAM REACH

- 10.58 On passing CHATHAM DOCKYARD, The Admiral's Barge will acknowledge and return a 1-gun salute.
- 11.05 On passing CHATHAM MARINA the Admiral's Barge will acknowledge and return a salute by dipping their Ensign
- 11.07 On passing UPNOR SAILING CLUB the Admiral's Barge will acknowledge and return a salute by dipping their Ensign.
- 11.10 On passing MEDWAY YACHT CLUB at Lower Upnor, the Admiral's Barge will acknowledge and return a 1-gun salute. MY "Becca Lou" will request permission from the Admiral to leave the convoy to embark the Commodore of Medway Yacht Club.
- 11.12 On passing WILSONIAN SAILING CLUB the Admiral's Barge will acknowledge and return the salute by dipping their Ensign.
- 11:15 on passing HOO NESS YACHT CLUB, The Admiral's Barge will acknowledge and return a 1-gun salute.
- 11:25 on passing GILLINGHAM MARINA, the Admiral's Barge will acknowledge and return a salute by dipping her Ensign.
- 11.30 On passing MEDWAY CRUISING CLUB the Admiral's Barge will acknowledge and return the salute by dipping their Ensign.
- 11:55 On approaching the EAST BULWARK BUOY the Admiral's Barge and Convoy will move to Port to pass close to MV "Mops" and then fire a 2-gun salute and dip her ensign. MV "Mops" with Sea Cadets lining the rails and Piper playing a lament will cast a tethered wreath into the river in memory of the lives lost at this spot during the First World War.

ALL VESSELS, ON APPROACHING THE EAST BULWARK BUOY should move across the shipping channel to pass MV "Mops" on their port side, dip their ensigns in Salute and continue with the cruise.

- 12.00 Provided conditions permit, vessels from the Kent Boat and Ski Club and Medway Yacht Club will move up astern of the Admiral's Barge to await transfer of the Admiral of The River and Commodore of RCC
- 12.05 On approaching SALTPAN REACH the Admiral and Escort will transfer to the high-speed craft to commence distribution of Commemorative Pennants to all craft taking part in the cruise. ALL CRAFT taking part should turn on their Navigation Lights

SKIPPERS ARE ADVISED TO KEEP A SHARP LOOKOUT FOR THE ADMIRAL and be prepared to snatch the pennant as it is offered from the speedboat. Navigation lights should be turned off when a pennant has been received on board.

As the Convoy passes the tug moorings, the Vessels of SVITZER TOWAGE may greet the Admiral with a Fire-Hose Display, unless otherwise committed on the day.

- 12:35 on passing Garrison Point, the Admiral will fire one cannon to mark the lower limits of his jurisdiction on the River Medway.
- 12:40 WEST CANT "Red Can No.10 Buoy

All other craft are requested to maintain cruising order and follow the Admiral to Garrison Point and the "Richard Montgomery" wreck.

12:55 After passing No.8 Buoy, the Admiral's Barge will move to Port and take a course to the East of the wreck of the "Richard Montgomery" where she will hove-to to allow a wreath to be cast onto the waters and a Dedication to be said by the Rev. Canon Dr. Philip Hesketh, in memory of those who perished at sea in the Two World Wars.

NB. THE WHOLE CRUISE SHOULD SLOW DOWN AND HOVE-TO WHILST THIS CEREMONY TAKES PLACE AND CARE SHOULD BE TAKEN BY SKIPPERS TO PREVENT BUNCHING.

The WREATH LAYING will be marked by announcement on VHF Ch. 8, two Cannons will be fired followed by the Dedication by the Rev. Canon Dr. Philip Hesketh, which will be relayed on channel 8 followed by a "ONE MINUTE SILENCE" the Bugler will then "SOUND OFF".

The Concrete Lighter used in previous years for the official party in Queenborough Harbour is unfortunately not available again this year.

13:10 After the Wreath Laying Ceremony, The Admiral's Barge together with Convoy will continue around the wreck of the "Richard Montgomery" and then turn back into the Medway on a course south back to Rochester Cruising Club moorings.

13:10 MY "Becca Lou" Skipped by Jimmy Lawrence, with the Mayor of Swale, Councillor Ken Ingleton will leave the convoy and take up position ready to greet the Admiral at the entrance to the Swale.

13:20 Upon reaching the mouth of the River Swale, the Admiral's Barge will fire 2 cannons to show good intent and be greeted by the Mayor of Swale, Councillor Ken Ingleton. After thanking the Mayor of Swale Councillor Ken Ingleton for his greeting, the Admiral's Barge will lead the Convoy back to Rochester Cruising Club.

14:55 Medway Yacht Club will dip their Ensign and the Admiral's Barge will respond by dipping her Ensign.

15:25 ROCHESTER CRUISING CLUB moorings of Admiral's Barge secure.

15:35 IMPORTANT – ALL MEMBERS AND THEIR GUESTS SHOULD PROCEED TO THE RCC CAR PARK AND WAIT TO GREET THE ADMIRAL AND OFFICIAL PARTY AS THEY COME ASHORE.

15:40 The Piper will lead the Admiral ashore to the RCC Clubhouse

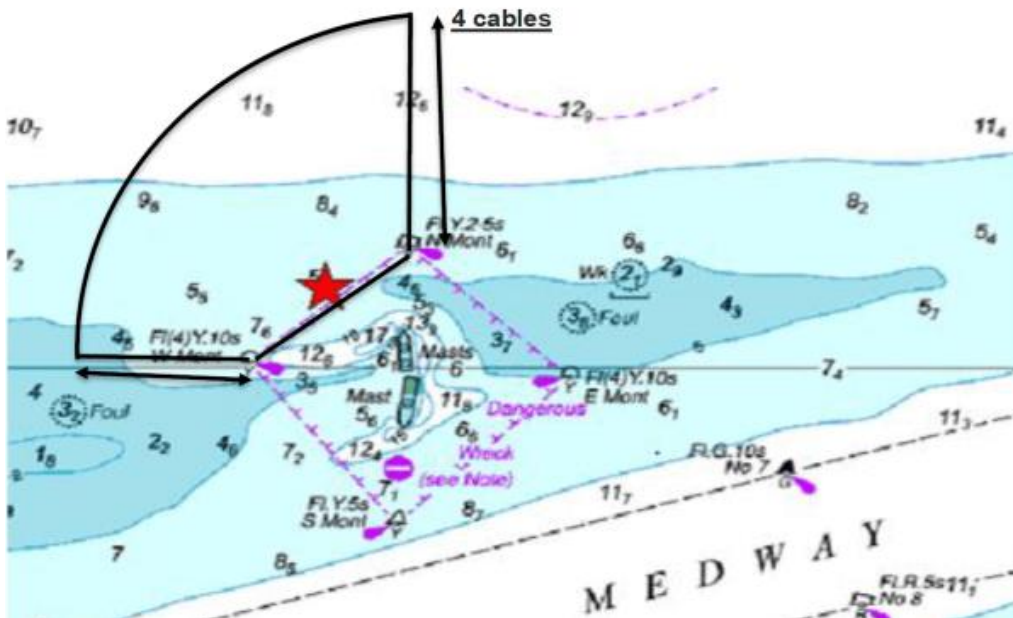
16:00 Reception in the Club House with Drinks and Buffet.

ALL THOSE PARTICIPATING IN THE CRUISE WILL BE WELCOME.

The Admiral, the Principal Water Bailiff and the RCC Commodore will, after supper, meet as many participants of the cruise and their guests as possible.

19:30 THE SUNSET CEREMONY will be performed outside the clubhouse with the Piper playing a Lament.

Please note that Peel Ports Notice to Mariners No 20 of 2018 warns us to stay at least 4 cables (approx. 800 yards) to the north west of the restricted area marked by the yellow danger buoys around the Montgomery wreck, as shown on the chart below. The red star shows the location of the oceanographic recording equipment, which is only marked by three small red floats.



SKIPPERS' BRIEFING

Wednesday 26th June 2019 @ 20.30 hours – Rochester Cruising Club

Saturday 29th June at 19.00 Hours

**There will be an
Admiral's Cruise BBQ
At Rochester Cruising Club**

All taking part in the Cruise are welcome

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Cruise Organiser on behalf of Rochester Cruising Club:

Reg Morris

01622 675459 (Home)

07779211517 (Mobile)

Email: regmorris@sky.com

Sunday 30th June 2019 at 16.00 Hours

**There will be an
Admiral's Reception in the Clubhouse with Drinks and Buffet
At Rochester Cruising Club**

**All taking part in the Cruise are welcome however please ensure tables and seating is
available for Skippers and crew that have hosted councillors during the cruise.**

Sunday 30th June 2019 - HMS “BULWARK” CEREMONY

Procedure for the ðBULWARKö Ceremony to include the MY ðMopsö

Wreath to be collected from RCC Clubhouse by the Officer in charge of the Sea Cadets.

10:15 MY ðMopsö to cast off and proceed ahead of the convoy to the Wreck site of H.M.S. ðBULWARKö in KETHOLE REACH

EAST BULWARK BUOY ó Green CAN Lat.51.25.36N Long.00.39.24E

11:40 On arrival at Wreck site MY ðMopsö to stand off or anchor close by to Starboard of EAST BULWARK BUOY in KETHOLE REACH.

11:45 Admiralø Barge óMY ðPolar Iceö, to call MY ðMopsö on Channel 8 with ETA.

11:55 The Sea Cadets to man the rails and await the convoy.

MV ðMopsö with dipped Ensign will then cast a tethered wreath into the waters. The Pipers will play a Lament and MY ðMopsö” will stand on STATION until the convoy passes by.

ALL VESSELS ON REACHING THE WRECK SITE WILL PASS MY “Mops” ON THEIR PORT SIDE, MAINTAIN THEIR SPEED, DIP THEIR ENSIGNS IN RESPECT, AND CONTINUE DOWN RIVER WITH THE CRUISE.

12:10 When all the convoy has passed by, MY ðMopsö will cast the wreath adrift and then join the rear of the convoy to complete the cruise.

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CRUISE NOTES: **A Risk Assessment is in place for this Cruise, a copy of which can be viewed, if required, by contacting Ian Foster.**

1. Life Jackets and adequate Safety Equipment including First Aid kit must be carried on all craft participating in the Cruise.
2. Skippers are reminded that not more than 12 passengers may be carried on their craft without clearance from D.O.T.
3. All boats taking part should keep constant listening watch on **CHANNEL 8**. This Channel will be used for "CONVOY CONTROL" and instructions. For private conversations - Call on **CHANNEL 16** and then change to another Working Channel. After completing the conversation, return to the listening watch on **CHANNEL 8**.

ALL CONVOY COMMUNICATIONS MUST BE THROUGH THE ADMIRAL'S BARGE – MY "Polar Ice"

4. Boats leaving or joining the cruise should request permission from the Admiral on Channel 8
5. All Skippers are requested to avoid creating excessive wash with their craft, particularly when above FOLLY POINT AND IN QUEENBOROUGH HARBOUR, where their speed **MUST NOT EXCEED 6 KNOTS**.
6. Skippers are requested to keep their boats in three lines astern of the official vessels and not to cut corners. Any boat unable to maintain the cruising speed of **6 KNOTS** should pull over and allow the convoy to close up. Skippers who experience problems with their boats should seek help from another boat near-by in the cruise or call "Ballerina"
7. Visiting craft may take up vacant mooring buoys on the STROOD side of the river.

Skippers who will have difficulty in returning to their moorings may return early to RCC by arrangement.

8. Skippers are requested to keep a sharp lookout for MY "Cornish Mead" which will be acting as Press Boat. She may be travelling against the convoy in order to achieve this.

All Cruise participants are reminded of their responsibility to keep a sharp lookout and to be aware of sailing vessels and particularly yachts racing on the day and to be aware of the relevant collision regulations

SKIPPERS ARE EXPECTED TO OFFER ASSISTANCE AT ANY TIME IF HELP IS REQUESTED

Officers of Rochester Cruising Club

Commodore	John Rufford
Vice Commodore	Jo Waltham
Rear Commodore Costal	Paul Newman
Rear Commodore Inshore	Chris Murr
Hon. Secretary	Greg Bayliss
Hon. Treasurer	Neil Simmons
Asst. Hon. Secretary	Reg Morris
Mooring Master	Gary Waltham
Bosun	Harry Cohen
Fuel Officer	Arther Stapley
Purser	Mark Henderson
Scrubbing Berth Officer	Les Stevens
Committee Member	Andrew Kift