

Warsash Rally

By Sally Peake

What a lovely weekend of good sailing weather we enjoyed in the Solent. I'll give a brief run-down from my perspective: I was working on Saturday morning so Steve and I slipped our mooring on the Isle of Wight at about 1615 on an ebbing tide and slid down river whilst setting sails on *Alanouwoly* (Freedom 28). A north-easterly wind of about Force three allowed us to skirt round the western edge of the Brambles Bank (where they play cricket on the lowest Spring tide of the summer!) and head straight for Warsash at the mouth of the River Hamble. It was lovely to see Chris Edward's *Dragonfly* alongside the Warsash Sailing Club pontoon: We happily went alongside her so that the two Freedom 28s could swap news. Chris and Edward Hooper took our lines and we were soon catching up on the day's events. Chris had taken seven junkies out sailing, quite daunting for a man who does most of his sailing single-handed. Not one for on-line forms he handed me cash to renew his JRA membership. (Good to have you back on board Chris!)

As Steve and I and Edward (who stayed with us aboard *Alanouwoly*) had been uncertain of our arrival time, we had not booked a meal. So we ventured to the pub next door and were well fed and watered before rejoining the rally goers in the Sailing Club for a natter. Boats attending were Robin and

Mandy Blain's *GiGi*, Derek and Dawn Shepherd's *Hui Mar*, *Dragonfly* and *Alanouwoly* plus a Virgo Voyager based

at Hayling Island which was unable to stay for the Sunday and so I missed meeting her owners. As well as those already mentioned, there were old and new faces - Gavin Dalgleish, Tom Wallace, Andrew Bailey, Arran, John and Jacquie, Geoff Turton, and Liz Batchelor who came down from a Boat Jumble in Berkshire to say "Hello".

After a quiet night on the river, Robin organised crews for the boats. Sadly Chris Edwards had to leave early to regain his mooring at Ashlett Creek: So it fell to us to have seven aboard while Robin sailed three up to Shamrock and *Hui Mar* sailed four up (*Hui Mar* had come up from Axmouth sailing in company with friends on their Bermudan- rigged Atlantic Viking which stayed at Warsash due to an engine problem). With a fresh ENE wind it was difficult to stay together. The two Freedoms vied with each other for a few minutes before Chris peeled off for Ashlett and we all headed up Southampton Water. Steve, locally born and bred, gave a running historical commentary on the local sights and it was decided to go beyond the Itchen junction to see the new cruise ship (to be named *Royal Princess* by Princess Kate later that week). Having ogled the vastness of eight storeys of floating hotel, we followed *Gigi* and *Hui Mar* up the Itchen to Shamrock Quay, where we all enjoyed a barbecue

while sat outside in the sunshine. I had a quick first look at Robin's new boat which is very smart: Epoxy on ply, with a water ballasting system to make trailer-sailing easier. A good reaching sail back to Warsash followed (enlivened by our mizzen halyard getting a phenomemal twist in it which made dropping the sail a little interesting)! We we dropped off Edward and Andrew and made haste for the Medina, waving to *Gigi* and *Hui Mar* as we passed them coming up river.

Thanks to Robin and Mandy Blain for taking on the organisation - quite an undertaking with so much catering.

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Sally Peake



Gavin and Robin aboard GiGi

© Andrew Bailey



Alanouwoly's sails pulling well

*Warsash Rally,
Photos on this page © Andrew Bailey*



Dragonfly - Freedom 28



*Hui Mar bombing along with
Nobody, apparently, at the helm*



Robin Blain's new boat, GiGi



David Kay's Virgo Voyager, Morawelon



Lunch in the sunshine



The treasurer tidying her lines