

CAMSAIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2023-2024

At our committee meeting in January it was decided to make Peter Jones President in recognition of his work in founding Camsail and I was then elected as Chairman until the AGM in December.

We began in September with our first outing to Flag Fen organised by Ann Jackson. 16 members enjoyed a guided tour on a lovely sunny day. Excavations began in 1971 ahead of the building of Peterborough New Town. In 1982 timbers were discovered in the Basin which confirmed it as an internationally important site. Bronze age boats were also found which are now undergoing expert conservation. A very interesting trip! Do go if you've never been.

At our first meeting in October we all benefitted from the comfort of our new chairs.

Our first speaker of the year was Robert Smith MBE, Harbour Master at Wells. He gave an informative and amusing account of his job as HM. The harbour dates from 1663 but was cut off from the town by Cook of Holkham Hall. Later harbour commissioners were appointed to run it. After shipwrecks the local fishermen would bring bodies ashore and remove any gold rings by biting off fingers!!

In November we welcomed Carl Lamb who joined a syndicate of racing sailors. During one Fastnet they experienced some very heavy weather off the Scillies and Carl was swept backwards down the companionway and was badly injured. He then showed a video and questioning followed.

At Christmas we held our AGM, then a nautical quiz, followed by wine and mince pies.

In the New Year we very much enjoyed the presentation by Stuart Withington- "Dr at Sea" when he joined the ARC as ship's doctor. He discussed medical kit and problems encountered during the voyage. He also criticised the design of many modern boats which lay people open to accidents.

At our February meet Graham and Lorraine Parkinson talked about building an ocean going boat to sail off on adventures round the world. They lived aboard for 22 years! They told tales of amazing discoveries on our planet and ended by performing some of the songs they had written.

Our final meeting saw a short presentation by two of our members, Graham Cox about the work done at Grafham for Sailability and Mike Pearce "Living Abroad" on his Hanse 370. His video was very entertaining, and he discussed the pros and cons of keeping a boat abroad.

We ended the season with 46 paid-up members ; we had an average attendance of about 30 at our meetings with speakers, and we had welcomed a number of visitors for their first time and hope they will want to join us next season.

In May we held our final trip led by John Peregrine to Bawdsey Radio Transmitter Block. This was the hub for the network of radio stations set up during the WW2 to detect enemy aircraft from Europe. Volunteers were on site to answer any queries. Some took lunch in Woodbridge before visiting the Long Shed to see progress on the Sutton Hoo longship.

Finally I would like to thank the committee for the help and support they have given this year.

Jim Hibbert