

TSCC



Thames Scout Cruising Club Newsletter No. 127

September 2025

Chairman's Log



Dear TSCC members, since the April newsletter the Spring and Summer events have come and gone and we are now looking forward to the next event, an afternoon of racing, for those who like a flutter on the horses, at Epsom followed by a tapas supper at El Rincon Spanish restaurant.

Looking back at those Spring and Summer events, we were looked after well, as usual, when 32 members and guests returned to the Beijing Restaurant in Addlestone. It was felt that the portion size was not particularly generous but that it was a good meal for the price. No doubt we shall go again.

Members have also enjoyed a cruise to Hamburg on the Cunard QM2, a Roy Orbison tribute gig, preceded by a supper at Cucinas in Oxted, Chicago at the New Wimbledon Theatre preceded by a Wetherspoons lunch, the Summer Garden Party at Mark and Jackie's and the Summer Getaway to Warners at Holme Lacy, and the Thames Cruise all of which are described in this newsletter.

In my previous log I mentioned that our committee members had been invited to the "re-launch" of 1st Stanwell Scouts to be an Air Scout Group and so, on Sunday 11th May, some of our committee members (Mark, Jackie, Ray, Elaina,



Janet, and me) attended the re-launch ceremony at which we formally presented the new Air Scout colour to Gary Rixon, 1st Stanwell Group Lead Volunteer. It was great to see the Air Scouts in their new blue uniform shirts and, as you can see in the picture, the TSCC Chairman and Secretary were resplendent in their Sea Scout uniforms as well.

In the picture taken at the re-launch are, left to right: Robert Evans OBE (Surrey County Councillor), Gary Rixon, Jon Button (Spelthorne Councillor), George Barber, Med Buck (Spelthorne Mayor), Joe Rogerson (Surrey County Scouts Lead Volunteer), Mark Marriott, Jayne Williams (1st Stanwell Scout Section Team Leader) and Colin Barney (ex Councillor and friend of the Group).

Regarding TSCC charitable donations, the committee have recently approved and paid £1,000 to the "Downslink" Explorer Unit (14 to 18 years old) in the Cranleigh, Guildford East District. This is for equipment that they need for expeditions to achieve Explorer Scout awards, King's Scout badge and DoE awards.

I was very pleased to be at a St. George's Day event at Ajax Sea Scouts on 23rd April when **Janet Barber was presented with her 50 years service certificate** for her fundraising work on the Ajax committee and latterly for her membership of the TSCC committee.

And so, TSCC maintains a full programme of events and supports the Scouts. Long may it continue.

George Barber

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TSCC is affiliated to the ATYC and the River Thames Society.

**Cover Photo: View of the Wye Valley from Symonds Yat Rock
(near Holme Lacy)**

(photo PS)

Cycle Museum Opening

3 May 2025

On a sunny Saturday in early May, members of the TSCC Committee were honoured to be invited to the official opening of the BMG Cycle Museum – believe it or not, in Dave Gray's own back garden. The garden is a bit of a suburban Tardis, filled with quirky nooks, screened from each other by numerous raised beds that create interest and make the garden, although not small, feel even larger than it is. We were amazed to learn that, in addition



to Dave himself and his sons Mike and Paul, there were 120 of us at the opening. The garden absorbed all of us effortlessly. Those present were mainly friends from the various clubs to which Dave belongs. His broad spectrum of interests includes not only cycles but also cars, and of course the TSCC.

The museum itself is nothing less than spectacular – a Tardis within a Tardis. It contains 26 heritage cycles, each beautifully presented and succinctly labelled. However, this is only the tip of the iceberg! Dave has twice that number stored elsewhere. Over time he will 'cycle' (sorry for that!) all the bicycles in and out of the museum to maintain interest and variety. And the museum is not just about the bikes. There is also a reconstruction of the work bench in a cycle repair shop as it would have looked 100 years ago. And there are mock-up shop windows displaying an immense array of historic cycling paraphernalia and memorabilia.



The official opening ceremony was elegantly performed by Lady Judy McAlpine, whose country estate contains a full-sized steam railway and a museum, visited by a fair number of TSCC members a couple of years ago.

After the event, we got to delve a little deeper into Dave's passion. Here are some questions we posed together with his responses:

What made you build the museum?

After Brenda died, I needed something to occupy me. Paul and Mike suggested the museum as a memento to their mum, hence we've named it the BMG (Brenda Maureen Gray) Museum. The only part we did not build ourselves was the concrete base. We started February 2024 and finished in March 2025. The building is highly insulated so the internal temperature can be controlled to protect the exhibits.



What got you first interested in historic cycles?

I was always involved with classic cars and then, 38 years ago, my son Andrew, who had a Saturday job at the local cycle shop, came home with a butcher's bike that he wanted (me) to restore. It interested me and it was a lot cheaper than restoring cars! That was when I started collecting, restoring and showing classic cycles.

Are historic cycles classified just like cars as 'vintage' or 'veteran'?

Bicycle date classifications are a very divisive issue. There are lots of dates flying about but generally, Veteran is up to 1919 and Vintage from 1920 to 1990. 1990 sounds very modern but it was 35 years ago!

What period does your collection span?

The collection spans the history of the bicycle from the Pedestrian Accelerator (Hobby Horse), Velocipede (Boneshaker), High Wheels (Penny Farthings) and Safety Machines, through to the 70s with the Raleigh Choppers.

Which is the rarest that you have?

The many Chopper collectors say that our Mk3 is the rarest because we have the only prototype in existence. For me personally it is a toss-up between the 1902 Royal Enfield spring-frame machine and the Scoo-Ped. Our Royal Enfield is the only one known to exist. The Scoo-Ped was built in 1958 by Elswick Hopper and had GRP moulded bodywork to protect the rider. That was the theory, but in reality it was far too heavy. Only five were built and three still exist but ours is the only complete example.

What is the most unusual that you have?

I have always collected unusual machines. There is the 1899 Columbia that has no chain but is powered by a shaft drive. Then there is the military folding bicycle designed at the height of the Cold War when Denmark was expecting to be occupied by Russia. They set up a secret army that would act as saboteurs in the event of an invasion. The folding cycles would allow them to move silently around the country. 500 were made under licence from BSA although fortunately they were never used.

Are you still collecting?

Of course. A lot of machines are offered to us by their elderly owners who don't want them to go out of the country which, unfortunately, often happens. Many owners are happy to receive less money if the cycle stays here as part of our heritage. It is costing a lot of money but our heritage is being saved, and there are no pockets in shrouds!

Following the colourful official opening, guests continued to enjoy the pleasant sunshine, a tasty finger buffet, and regular liquid top-ups from Dave's hard-working helpers, plus live music from the Blue Moon Jazz Band, well known to TSCC members. And to cap it all, £500 was raised for Dave's local charity, The Patient Cancer Support Group, which Lady McAlpine matched with another £500. This volunteer charity organises treats such as river trips and afternoon teas to help brighten the lives of those dealing with remorseless medication and chemo.

All in all, a great success. Dave has kindly offered to host a TSCC event next year and you can be sure we will take him up. It is certain to be a fascinating afternoon for all.

Mark Marriott

CRUISE TO HAMBURG ON QUEEN MARY 2

On Monday 12th May 2025, a group of members boarded the Queen Mary 2 at Southampton for a five-day cruise. Our destination was Hamburg, where we arrived on Wednesday 14th. Several members of our group had booked a guided coach tour of Hamburg and boarded the coach at the dockside near to our ship.

Andreas, our excellent guide, explained the history of Hamburg as the coach wended its way through the spacious, tree-lined streets.

Hamburg is the second largest city in Germany after Berlin and has a population of around five million people. It stands on the head of the estuary of the river Elbe, which flows into the North Sea. During the Medieval period it was a member of the Hanseatic League, which was a network of guilds and market towns in Northern Europe. The League offered privileges to members and protection on trade routes. It established trading posts in other cities, including London. Before the unification of Germany in 1871 Hamburg was a sovereign state in its own right.

A series of disasters has led to large parts of the city being re-built several times. In 1842 a disastrous fire, known as the Great Fire of Hamburg, destroyed large portions of the inner city. In 1943, during the Second World War, the city was repeatedly bombed by the RAF and the American Air Force. Sixty percent of housing was destroyed and 37,000 people killed. In 1962 the North Sea Flood destroyed the houses of around 60,000 people.

Because of the widespread loss of buildings in the past, Hamburg gives the impression of being a mainly modern city. However, the steeples of its many churches on the skyline help to contradict this and are a reminder of its historical past. One church we passed was St. Nikolai. The original church was destroyed by the Great Fire of 1842. It was subsequently re-built to a design by George Gilbert Scott, who designed the Albert Memorial. It had a 147.4 metre spire, which made it, for a short while, the tallest building in the world. Now just a shell after allied bombing during the war, it has been left as a reminder of that time in the same way as the ruins

of the old Coventry Cathedral have been retained. Another reminder of the war was an air raid shelter, which was a tower resembling a large windmill minus its sails.



After driving around for a while, we got off the coach and visited the **City Hall, or Rathaus**, as it is called. This impressive building stands on one side of the main square in Hamburg. It is a mixture of Gothic and Renaissance styles and was completed in the 1880's. Although there is elaborate decoration throughout, the building has an overall graceful appearance. Members of the State Assembly meet in one wing of the building,

whilst the other wing deals with more civic matters. The Rathaus is built around a central courtyard, dominated by a fountain representing Hygieia, the goddess of hygiene. It was erected in memory of a cholera outbreak in 1892.

Back on the coach we drove through other parts of the city, including the red-light district (!) where the streets were narrow and the buildings less impressive. There were clubs and bars, indicative of the area's nightlife. It was in this area that The Beatles stayed and played here shortly before they became famous. An area here is known as Beatles-Platz and contains an abstract metal statue representing the band.

We passed on through another area where just a few half-timbered buildings remained to give an impression of the old city. Then we got out of the coach once more to visit the **church of St Michael**. It was built in the eighteenth century in an elaborate Baroque style, which seemed surprising as it is a Lutheran church. At 433 feet the clock tower is something of a landmark. We attended a short service (in German, of course!) in the beautiful setting of the church interior, interspersed by a recital of organ music. There are four organs in the church and additional organ pipes above the ceiling. Afterwards, we resumed our journey, passing through the old warehouse and canal district of the city, which has been re-developed in recent years in a way which was apparently influenced by the Canary Wharf district of London.

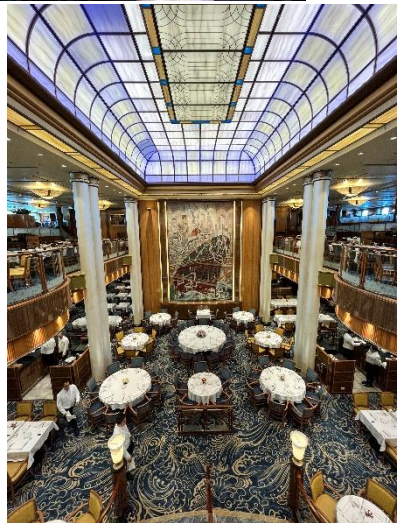


Our tour finished back at the dock by our ship. It had been very interesting and enlightening and whetted the appetite for a further visit.

Irene Burroughs



On board
the
fabulous
Queen
Mary 2





On 23rd May 2025, Mark and Jackie organised a trip to Oxted 'Barn Theatre' to see the Roy Orbison experience. This featured the vocal talents of Oliver Harris, backed by a talented band of musicians. This tribute show captured the essence of Roy Orbison's timeless classics, from "Oh, Pretty Woman" to "Only the Lonely" and everything in between. The Roy Orbison Tribute Experience transported us back in time to the golden age of rock and roll.

The theatre itself is, incidentally, quite interesting. The original structure was an old saw mill barn which was probably constructed during 1434 just over a mile away in the village of Limpsfield. It was moved to its present location in Oxted and opened as a theatre in 1924 seating 350 people. In spite of its small size, past performers have included Roy Castle, Ronnie Corbett, Flora Robson, Jimmy Tarbuck and the pianist Eileen Joyce who lived in Limpsfield.

Before we watched the performance, we all had an early evening meal at Cucina's restaurant in Oxted, organised by Pauline.

The day just happened to be a milestone birthday for Colin, and Jackie had prepared a cake for the occasion – can you make out the chocolate tools paying homage to Colin's DIY skills?

It was very thoughtful of Mark and Jackie to organise this event in Oxted where quite a number of our members live – it made a refreshing change for those members to have the shortest journey.



CHICAGO

12 June 2025



Described in Metro as the "sexiest musical ever" this New Wimbledon Theatre production starred Strictly Come Dancing Professional Dancer and TV Star Janette Manrara (It Takes Two, Burn The Floor, Glee) as Roxie Hart, and West End and TV star Darren Day (Joseph, We Will Rock You, Doctors, Celebrity Big Brother) as Billy Flynn.

With 6 Tony Awards, 2 Olivier Awards, a Grammy and thousands of standing ovations, the show did not disappoint.

Twenty-eight members attended the show which was preceded by lunch in the Wibbas Down Inn. A great time was had by all. Thanks again Mark and Jackie.



The Thames Cruise

15-20th June 2025

The Thames Cruise in June started well with lunch at The Boatman on the waterfront



Janet at the helm of MV Saluki

at Windsor when boaters were joined by a “shore party” of members plus Gary Rixon and Jayne Williams of 1st Stanwell Air Scouts. Three boats, Lady Natalia (Mark, Jackie, Colin, Daphne and Graham), Wisecrack (Andrew & Celia), MV Saluki (Jan and I) then proceeded upstream, mooring at Cookham

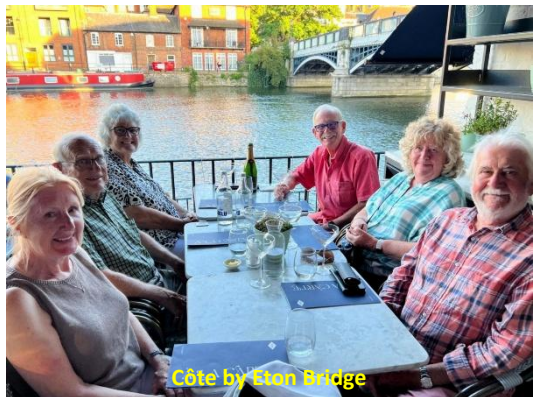
Town moorings for a BBQ, then on to Henley for two nights where the boaters were again joined by the shore party (in no particular order, Tania, Peter, Pauline, Andy, Pauline, Clive, Judy, David, Jo, Ray, Elaina, Mike, Ann). The fun and games at Henley are described hereafter.



Mapledurham

The second day at Henley marked the end of the club cruise and activities, however, MV Saluki and Lady Natalia minus Graham carried on up -river together mooring at Pangbourne for a BBQ, then on to Wallingford and Abingdon, joined from time to time by Wisecrack. On the return to Windsor, we dined and breakfasted at

the Beetle and Wedge riverside pub at Moulsoford and, not finding a mooring at Pangbourne, we moored at Mapledurham where we had a stroll around this tiny village and visited St. Margarets church. A welcoming touch in this church was a supply of cold drinks for visitors for which, possibly uniquely, one could pay or donate by means of a card reader on hand for visitors to use. Continuing downstream we stopped at Henley again where we dined at the Bistro at the Boathouse and finished our cruise with a meal at the riverside Côte at Windsor, thus ending two weeks of glorious sunshine and good company.



Côte by Elton Bridge

George Barber

Thames Cruise Games Day

19th June 2025

This year the games, which have been held for a number years in Hurley, were held on Mill Meadow in Henley-on-Thames. Those who arrived on boats, met-up with those members who stayed overnight at the Catherine Wheel Hotel. It was a hot sunny day and we had a fun afternoon. Our congratulations to Andy, the overall winner and recipient of the much sought after trophy. Janet provided us with a splendid afternoon tea, our thanks to Janet and her helpers.





The "Class Act" in the garden of the Catherine Wheel.

On each of the two evenings in Henley, Mark and Jackie arranged restaurant meals, the first at Pokhara Delight and the second at Al Forno. These were attended by both the shore party and the boaters. I think everyone enjoyed the trip and, as always, the good company.



Pokhara Delight

GARDEN PARTY

6 July 2025

Once again, Mark and Jackie kindly invited us to their home for the Garden Party. It was a really joyous event with great food, and entertainment provided by a charming keyboard player: Peter Toth. Sheldon and Will again provided Mark and Jackie with valuable help. In between the sunny spells we did have a shower or two but they just added to the fun.







Photos Peter and Mike

HOLME LACY

1-4 August 2025



Twenty-five of us enjoyed an excellent trip to Holme Lacy. We were very sorry that Clive and Judy had to cancel at the last minute following an accidental fall and we wish Judy a speedy recovery.

Holme Lacy is a 17th century mansion set in 20 acres of gardens, in Herefordshire. Everyone made their own plans for days out. There were many sights to see within easy reach including: Hereford Cathedral, Berrington Hall, Croft Castle, and Symonds Yat Rock. Alternatively, a very pleasant day could be spent in the grounds of Holme Lacy.

There were two different restaurants and we were able to experience both. People seemed to appreciate the size of their rooms and the comprehensive amenities.

The reason Mark and Jackie chose this particular break was due to the entertainment, which featured an 'Everly Brothers and Friends' tribute act.

The 'Friends' were tribute artists to Buddy Holly, Hank Marvin, and Jerry Lee Lewis. I don't think I was alone in saying my favourite was Jerry Lee Lewis – an excellent performer and entertainer named Pete Gill - seen at the keyboard in the picture below.



On the other two nights we saw "The Revolvers" with Sound of the Sixties and the 'Warner Theatre Company' with Rock of Stages (featuring a number of 'Queen' hits among others).





In the gardens of Holme Lacy

Our thanks to Mark and Jackie for organising the trip.

Photos: Mark, Sally, Ian & Peter



Don't forget the photo competition!

The three winners of last year's competition have jointly chosen the theme:

'Animals of the British Isles'

It has been decided that birds fall within the definition of animals. The photo must be taken by you.

With the prestigious Ray Andrews trophy in your sights, we wish you happy snapping and look forward to a bumper entry in November.



PROGRAMME OF EVENTS FOR 2025

All dates and events are subject to change

Afternoon Racing at Epsom followed by Tapas Supper at El Rincon	Thurs 11 th September
Theatre Trip – Top Hat (Wimbledon)	Thurs 16 th October
Gala Lunch – Brockham Grumpy Mole	Wed 12 th November TBC
Overnight Getaway to Winchester Cathedral Christmas Market	Sun 7 th December
Glyndebourne Christmas Concert	Fri 12 December



The Committee after a meeting at Ray and Elaina's

Thames Scout Cruising Club Grants

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR SCOUTS/GUIDES

**TSCC is always looking for Scouting/Guiding projects which need financial support.
If your local Group is in need of funds for specific projects ask them to write a letter
to our Secretary giving full details.**

Our Committee will be pleased to consider all requests.

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