

THE EAST COAST BRADWELL (UK) RALLY, July 21st and 22nd July 2012

Report by Robin Blain (Rallies Organiser)

Hosted by Bradwell Marina & Yacht Club, Bradwell-on-sea, Essex, UK

(www.bradwellmarina.com)



Although summer to date had been wet and windy, the pre-rally forecast filled us with optimism for fine weather and wonderful winds, and sunshine encouraged several of us to reach Bradwell by the Friday evening, only to be greeted by a thunderstorm. In true 'yachty' fashion we made a dash for the 'Green Man' pub for some good food and ale.



Saturday morning greeted us with sunshine and fair winds, and your reporter/rally organiser, Robin Blain and his crew Clay Everington rigged *GIGI*, Robin's Swallow Bay Cruiser 20, and prepared her for naming, initial launch and the intake of water ballast.



(photo Geoff Turton)



Geoff Turton takes a working model of a junk rig to boat jumbles, where it always draws attention. He brought it with him to this rally, where it also produced a lot of interest.
(photo Andrew Bailey)



As the weather warmed up, members began assembling in the Marina bar and on the terrace, where skippers and crew waited to learn who they'd be sailing with. (photo Andrew Bailey)

Once everyone was fed and watered, the crews took to the boats whose owners were generously providing sailing for all who wanted the experience. There were nine boats:

- Andrew and Monica Varney's Colvic 27, *Joleta of Pettycur* (Hasler-style rig)
- Tom Wallace's Virgo Voyager 23, *RAM III* (individual cambered panels slotted into sail tracks on the battens)
- Tim & Tess Metcalf's Kingfisher 26, *Chopsticks* ('one-piece' cambered panel sail)
- John Dinnin's Liberty 22, *Alouette* ('one-piece' cambered panel sail)
- Bob Ager's Liberty 22, *Orlando* ('one-piece' cambered panel sail)
- Paul Tucker's Varne 28, *Barny* (bendy battens)
- Robin Blain's Swallow Bay Cruiser 20, *GIGI* (hinged battens)
- John Brown's Sharpie 38, *Stroller* (hinged battens), and last but not least
- Phil Corridan's Freedom 21, *Verity* (Freedom 'cat' rig)

That afternoon we had ideal sailing conditions in the Blackwater Estuary, with a cloudless sky and Force 3 winds.

GIGI with Orlando and Joleta enjoying a fine afternoon breeze
(photo Andrew Bailey)





Tim Metcalf's Kingfisher 26 Chopsticks running downwind (photo Andrew Bailey)



Bob Ager's Orlando on port tack, (photo Robin Blain)



Joleta and Barny, broad-reaching up Bradwell Creek (photo Andrew Bailey)

By 1700 most of us were back in Bradwell Marina where we had a good view from the balcony of *RAM III*'s return, and were able to discuss our experiences over a cup of Rosie Lee (tea)... (photo Andrew Bailey)



Meanwhile Robin Blain had displayed the JRA junk shop wares: sweat- and T-shirts, burgees, ties and a selection of books from our library. (Some of these are now available as *PDFs* in the Members' section of our website, www.junkrigassociation.org - click on 'Our Library'.)

By 1900 we were enjoying the hospitality of the Bradwell Quay Yacht Club, where Joanne and Danny Merry of 'Merrys' Fine Foods', fired up their barbecue flames on the terrace ready for twenty-five hungry sailors, who were now indoors, to tuck into one of the finest meals we have ever had. It fuelled us for a great evening of old salts' tales.



(photo Andrew Bailey)

Sunday morning dawned sunny and bright, with a Force 4 breeze and, after everyone had assembled on the marina balcony, it was musical chairs for the crews and off we set once more for the Blackwater.



Bradwell Nuclear Power Station keeping a watchful eye on the JRA junks (photo Robin Blain)



Alouette with her striking peak panels (photo Robin Blain)



Dudiferent (photo Andrew Varney)



RAM III (photo Robin Blain)

We had a great sail across the estuary to Tollesbury Marina, where we had a really good buffet lunch, with a wide range of beers and wines in the Tollesbury Cruising Club. In the afternoon, still in glorious sunshine, we sailed gently away. As we neared Shingle Head Point, we met a brisk south-easterly breeze that had us entering the Blackwater with two or more panels reefed, giving a close reach back to Bradwell in time for more tea and chat. This went on so long that the Marina restaurant had closed by the time most members decided to leave for home! So there was nothing for it but to retire to the Green Man again for essential sustenance, and to celebrate the end of another successful rally at Bradwell.