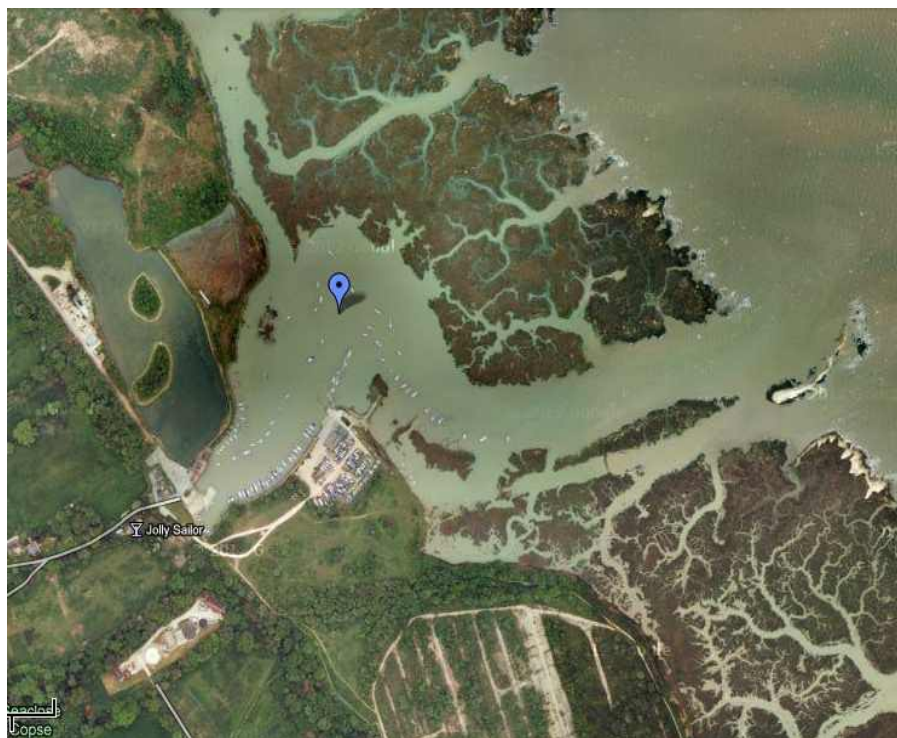


ASHLETT CREEK (UK) SUMMER RALLY - 23rd and 24th June 2012

Report by Robin Blain. Rally hosted by Ashlett Sailing Club, Ashlett Creek, Southampton Water, UK.



The Ashlett Creek 2012 Summer Rally was the first at this venue, which has become something of a haven for shoal-draught, junk-rigged yachts – seven of them now - in the last few years.

It started at mid-day in bright and sunny weather but promised, and delivered, gusts up to F6. Twenty members had assembled at the club, so we regrouped in the Tide Mill (below, pic. Cameron Taylor) for a ‘pie and a pint’ type of lunch.



Members had the option of sailing with:

- Cameron Taylor in his Newbridge Pioneer Pilot 26, *Lotus II*
- Steve & Sally Peake in their Freedom 30, *Alanouwoly*,
- Anthony Cooke in his Ebbtide 28, *Zuleika Louise*
- Chris Edwards in his Freedom 30, *Dragonfly*, or
- Jon Stone in his Sunbird 28 *Rose*.

One of the other boats that we had hoped would be sailing was stormbound in Littlehampton, one had returned home with engine failure, and the local Navigator 19 was stormbound in Ashlett Creek, so we all got aboard those that were prepared to take us on Southampton Water. Heavily reefed, they gave us a good, boisterous but enjoyable afternoon sail...



The crews gather on the club jetty
(Robin Blain)



Jon Stone's Sunbird 28, *Rose*,
running past Fawley Refinery
(Robin Blain)



Steve & Sallye Peakes' Freedom 30,
Alanouwoly, reefed down to 3 panels
(J Liddiard)



A perfect reminder of 'summer' 2012 in the UK – Cameron Taylor's Newbridge Pioneer Pilot 26, *Lotus*, with Calshot in the distance (J Liddiard)



In the afternoon we adjourned for light refreshments and much chat, comparing experiences. At the left are some of the gang gathered on Anthony Cooke's Ebbtide 28, *Zuleika Louise* (photo Robin Blain).

At 1900 we reassembled at the Tide Mill for dinner with a choice of fourteen dishes and some fine ale.



Sunday saw a full English breakfast at the Mill to prepare us for a two-hour walk along the coast to Calshot Castle and back, while the tide was out. This proved to be an enlightening experience, especially for those of us who had sailed past many a time without realising that it is encircled by a moat that could accommodate a sampan! (Robin Blain)



Chris Edwards giving his 'tour guide' talk (Robin Blain)



The sign clearly shows what butterfly wings and junk sails have in common (Robin Blain)

Then it was back to the Mill for lunch, after which members who had a long way to go home departed, as did boats that had to leave the creek, while there was water left to do so.

The Peakes took the remaining members for a good sail in their Freedom 30 before returning to their base on the Medina River, Cowes.

It then only remained for the Rally Secretary to make sure that all were accounted for, drop one member at Southampton railway station, put another up for the night and live on the memories of a great, informal gathering of members, and an interesting variety of junk-rigged craft.