



## **Army and Navy Club Yacht Squadron Commodore's End of Season Report 2025**

Given today is the Autumn Equinox - when the sun illuminates the northern and southern hemispheres equally - it seems an appropriate moment to set pen to paper – so to speak – to mark the end of the Army and Navy Club Yacht Squadron's 2025 season.

It's also appropriate to take a moment, to remember how closely sailing is linked - even in these days of chart plotters - with the rotation of the earth and the apparent movements of the sun, moon and stars. For our voyages are closely connected with the rise and fall of the tide, tidal flow, dawn and dusk, weather systems and the winds they produce and of course, as in days gone by, fixing our position. Although not necessarily these days with a sextant and the noon sight.

As sailors we are inextricably linked to nature – and you'd be a dull soul if you didn't feel a wider connection to the cosmos when standing watch on a star filled night – and our methods and traditions derive as much from the realities of voyaging a satisfyingly challenging environment as they do to the universe's rhythms. And it's worth bearing in mind that the HMCG and the RNLI recorded far fewer incidents of sailors going aground before chart plotters became readily available and sailors needed to rely on compasses, paper charts, tidal curves, pencils and yes, sextants!

And so, to this season's Commodore's report.

We've had a great time in 2025 with a more ambitious programme and an increasing range of options to set sail and enjoy convivial company.

Offshore we kicked off the year in May with our first ever mid-week cruise. Boarding the Army Sailing Association's Hallberg Rassy 34.5 Grebe VIII in Gosport to to Portland via a night on a swinging mooring in Studland Bay – which remarkably we had pretty much to ourselves – to return via Yarmouth. Our arrival at Portland coincided with the eve of VE Day and we dressed ship and dug out blazers and ties to dine ashore, to toast our gallant forebears and brothers in arms.



### **Ready for a 'run ashore' to commemorate VE Day**

Our second trip of the year was also aboard Grebe VIII but was more modest affair and weekend based. It saw the squadron crew enjoying a classic Solent cruise taking in the Hamble and Cowes.

The third cruise was due to be further afield, towards the West Country coast but met with frustration from the start. Our chartered yacht (from the Go Sailing Association) bumped into a Border Force Cutter while mooring. Unsurprisingly, it came off worse and couldn't be repaired in time for the planned trip to go ahead. Despite this setback, we have continuing ambitions to add the West Country to our programme for next year.

Our major development for 2025 was the start of inshore sailing. This was aboard one of the ASA's fleet of Chiswick Harbour based Folkboats and squadron members found these 25ft yachts to be great fun to sail. Earlier this year, the squadron had been invited to enter a crew into the 2026 Combat Arms Inshore Regatta, so the day was also intended to be something of a teambuilding opportunity to start pulling a crew together for this event next May. There are, however, still crew slots available and if you'd like to join in please contact [sailing@therag.co.uk](mailto:sailing@therag.co.uk)



### **Aboard an ASA Folkboat giving thought to next year's Combat Arms Inshore Regatta**

It's perhaps worth reminding all members, that as the squadron's group member of the Army Sailing Association, our individual members can charter both their Hallberg Rassy 34.5 and their inshore fleet of Folkboats and Crabbers. While to date our charters have all been on a squadron basis, you can (subject to holding the appropriate qualification), charter any of these boats at a highly competitive rate. For further information, please contact [sailing@therag.co.uk](mailto:sailing@therag.co.uk)

What has been particularly pleasing this year, is that through the squadron's informal networks – particularly our WhatsApp Group – members have taken to inviting other members to sail with them. Opportunities which emerged, included a day's sailing on the Medway, an invitation to join this year's Fastnet Race, a trip with the RNVR Yacht Club to the Channel Islands and a circumnavigation of the Isle of Arran.

Ashore we've also had a successful social programme. The season started with Fitting Out Drinks and come autumn we continue with our Lecture and Drinks Evenings and our formal Laying Up Dinner. Then, to finish the off year, we have the Commodore's 'Bovril and Sherry' Lunch in December. This is by personal invitation and is for those who have been actively involved in or contributed to the year's squadron activities.

And for those who are curious, the title of the lunch comes from the scene in Noel Coward's wartime film, *In Which We Serve*, when her Captain gives a drink to the Commanding Officer of an infantry battalion just picked up from Dunkirk. When asked what the drink is by the CO, Coward replies, 'just ordinary Bovril laced with a heavy dash of sherry'.

RNA; 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2025



**Squadron Commodore trying to practice what he'd like to preach!**

