

Cowes Rally - 27th to 29th August 2022

The Solent Branch held their second rally in August over the bank holiday weekend at Shepards Marina in Cowes. Fifteen yachts attended including members from Poole in the west and Chichester in the east. The start of the weekend although hot and sunny wasn't good for sailing so the North Basin was filled by mid-afternoon with most motoring by the shortest route. Although some took time out to anchor in Osborne Bay for a swim.



The rally got underway on Saturday evening with a dinner at the Island Sailing Club attended by thirty-three members and guests. This was a great opportunity to catch-up with friends and to make new friends too. The club was busy serving on their main floor the best part of 150 guests from the competitors for the power boat races on Sunday. They had given us their terrace marquee with a panoramic view of the harbour, this was ideal for our party. The food and service was excellent and contributed to an enjoyable evening.

Those lying-in on Sunday morning were abruptly awoken by the sound of the power boats firing up. With the boats heading out the harbour some members wandered down to the Royal Yacht Squadron or Egypt Point to see the start of the Cowes Torquay Cowes race.

Sunday lunchtime we met up in Northwood Park at the top of the town for a picnic followed by friendly (but competitive) croquet matches.



The picnic area is adjacent to Northwood House that was the home of the Ward family and nowadays is used as a wedding venue. So whilst playing croquet or just relaxing in the park we were entertained by Elvis performing two sets of his greatest hits to wedding guests. Not to fuel any conspiracy theories I believe he was actually a lookie-likie, but very good nonetheless.

In the early evening back at Shepards we had our pontoon party with a tropical theme that was a good opportunity for those who like to wear garish shirts and dresses.



This turned out to be most. There was a good party spirit with everyone joining in and enjoying the food and drink on offer.

Monday remained sunny but with a good northeasterly force four. This suited those wanting to go West but not so great for those going East. We had to do some shuffling in the North Basin to get the yachts out wanting to get some of the East going tide, but a good sail home was there to be had.

Andy and Karen Billowes