

## **Shamrock Quay and The Folly – Rally Report. Bank Holiday weekend 26-28<sup>th</sup> August 2023. A story with a Moral.**

**Rally Leader – Paul Armstrong**

**It has been a long time since the last rally to Shamrock Quay.**

**It was a Bank Holiday long weekend.**

**Was the Rally going to be swamped with Registrations, with a Waiting List to boot?**

**Was I worried? What could possibly go wrong?**

**How wrong can one can be in life???? Or sailing .....**

On a Thursday, with just four days to go to Registration close, only one boat for the whole weekend (in addition to Pagetal) was booked, for The Folly. Thank you Andre.

So I made a Rally Leader call ..... it was a set of Bank Holiday bookings and to be fair to the two marina operators, and the two restaurants (that were already asking for menu choices) I cancelled everything, with abject apologies. How could I get anywhere near 9 boats and 20 people to dine at Shamrock, or 6 boats and 15 people to dine at The Folly??

Imagine my emotions two days later, when on the water at the Jubilee 50<sup>th</sup> Year Lymington Sailaway Rally weekend, my phone started vibrating, with registration after registration!! Oh No!!!

Back home on the Tuesday, I begged borrowed and stealed from the four places I had cancelled a few days earlier. I managed to get enough berths for Shamrock Quay. A few of us ventured out whilst Southampton FC were beating QPR, and managed to find a tidy little micro-brewery for an hour. Lovely! Then in the evening, 10 of us dined at the Bistro and enjoyed a good quality supper.



Then off to The Folly, where other club boats joined in. We had lost the walk-ashore pontoon original booking because of the cancellation, so ended up together on a very busy mid-river pontoon with no electricity or water, but at only £2 a metre it

was a bargain. Danu ended up being 5<sup>th</sup> boat out on a raft. There were 2 new member boats on their first rally – Solent Blue and Scott Free – Troika on only their second rally, and then Pagetal, Rondo, and Danu.

A planned pontoon party for 18:00 was usurped by John and Nina inviting people onto Solent Blue for “tea at 4pm”. A few of us had gone for a bit of a walk to stretch our legs, and joined the tea-party slightly late, only to find lots of drinks being had, but not a cup of tea in sight!! Extremely convivial, and an excellent chance for the newer members to meet and spend time with us “older sea salts”.



A water-taxi was requested for 19:00 and 14 of us went across to dine together on one big table. The Folly staff were very helpful, food arrived quickly, and mostly everyone felt the food standard was very good. I thought the wine was good too!

As we were spread out along the pontoon, rather than being close together, and with many other boats there too, and all leaving at different times, we didn't really see much of each other in the morning, other than to shout at each other as we left. I understand that everyone enjoyed the weekend however, so that is the best outcome possible.

**Is there a moral to this story?**

**Should a rally leader hold on to all the bookings, when no-one has registered .... In the hope it will all come good??**

**OR would it just be easier if our lovely members registered earlier, and saved the Rally Leader all the hassles that might be incurred?**

**I know I aged about 10 years in two days, not to mention the time it all took.**

**Please book early!!!!**