DAINTY DIARY 2022

THE LOG OF A CRUISER / RACER FROM BOSHAM

CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

14th September to 5th October 2022

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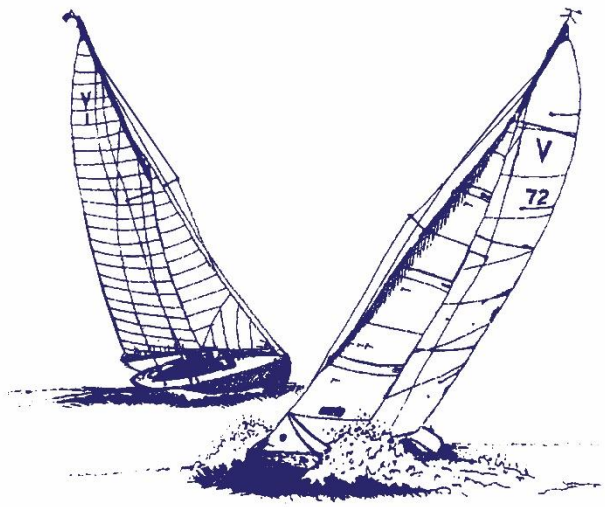


In Brief

After the customary careful planning, preparation and packing, the trip down ran very smoothly; by ferry from Portsmouth, overnight to Caen and stop offs close to Macon and Montélimar.

Kindly launched by members of the YC de Cannes, Dainty then moored stern-to the granite quay of the old port, ready for Les Régates Royales and alongside a gathering of the greatest classic yachts in the world. With no sponsor this year, somehow this brought the yachtsmen even closer as they berthed and entertained next to one another and made it the friendliest of events.

Even though we decided it was too windy to race on the Wednesday, we picked up good enough results in the other three races to come 2nd in class. We were even awarded a special prize by the port authority.

This year's passage race from Cannes to Saint-Tropez was again tough. We drifted out to find a sea breeze, fetched past the beautiful Cap du Roux, but then had a hard sail to windward in some 20 knots with a choppy sea and a final beat up the Golfe de Saint-Tropez. Even though it took eight hours to get there, the sight of the clock tower and the Provencal coloured harbour is magical. Then the YC de France party that followed quickly restored our spirits.

The mistral blew for three days, until we had the privilege of being invited to join the Gstaad Yacht Club's unique race only for 100-year-old boats.

There were then just two races for the Les Voiles Invitee class; one in very light winds, the other during which the mistral returned. With competitors such as Maria Giavanni II and the One Ton cup world champion Resolute Salmon, we had not fancied our chances. However, Dainty's team adapted well to the conditions, finished with a 2nd and a 4th to come 2nd in class, behind Harold Cudmore again.

We did break the backstay in a start line accident at Cannes, but otherwise Dainty returned home battered but not bruised.

Trip down: Le Vieux Ferme outside Macon ticked all the boxes: close by the autoroute, parking area big enough for the Merc to turn Dainty on her trailer, excellent chef and even a beautiful outlook from our bedroom window across the Saone.

Moulinmariman near Montélimar was, on the other hand, disappointing. The attention of Jo, the owner / manager / baker, was all on preparation for the wedding reception for the next day.

Cannes: When we arrived on Saturday morning everyone was extremely friendly. Glasses were raised to Dainty when we gave a beer to the six YC de Cannes members (including Commodore Jean-Pierre) who had kindly launched *Dainty*, as part of the entry fee.

The economic downturn meant no sponsored regatta centre and Cannes municipality contracting out the port reduced the support boats when *Dainty* sailed in. Nevertheless, Regattes Royales at Cannes was very sociable beside the long line of the world's most beautiful classic yachts, Dainty was much admired and enjoyed good racing.

Lay Day Monday allowed us to stay in apartment Claudia and watch the funeral, while Dainty paid respects with ensign flown at half-mast.

1st Race: Came 3rd in perfect hot, sunny, 15 knots.

2nd Race: The next day we sailed out to the start in less than 10 knots, practiced taking in a reef, then as soon as we took it out it suddenly blew up to over 20 knots, so we hastily put it back in again! Started the race but decided discretion was the better part of valour and returned to port, while just two of our class finished the race.

3rd Race: Backstay caught by a competitor's bow at the start line. The mast was held up by a tight mainsail. David brilliantly and bravely repaired it just about in time to jibe at the windward mark. Then another glorious sail and again came 3rd behind two 6 Metres.

On the Thursday David Giffard left for home, by train and bicycle. Christine Graves then joined Mike Hollis as crew and on Friday Jeremy Parker completed the successful team for the week.

Jeremy Parker and D3, Tuiga

Enjoyed crossing close in front of Naema.

The Firefly Dragon team of Stewart and Maxine Reed, Al Grant, Tabatha and Lottie Johns joined us for the traditional five course dinner at La Brouette de Grandmere.

Al Grant, Peter, Maxine, Christine, Stewart, Mike, David, Sally, Lottie, Lesley, Jeremy & Tabatha

4th Race: On Saturday it rained all day, chilly, just like Solent in May. Another third place got us on the podium. We were even awarded a special prize by the port authority, with a very flattering speech which we think roughly translated as "*Dainty* is the nicest boat".

Dinner afterwards was enjoyed at La Cote du Jardin with Sam and Laure, who had been very helpful role in the Regattes Royale organisation when Dainty first came down, some 17 years ago

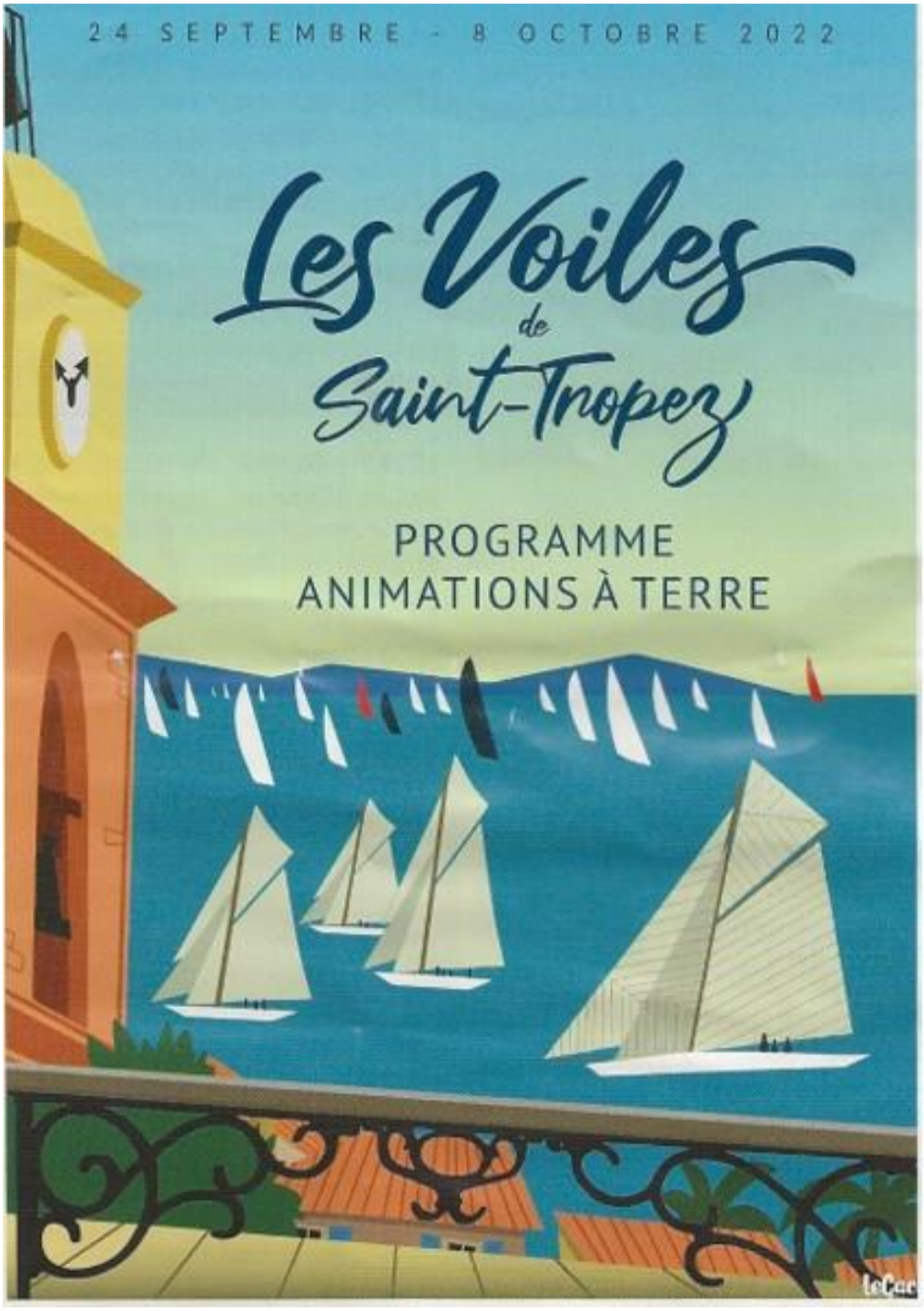
Sunday's "Coup D'Automne" of the Yacht Club de France, a 25-mile passage race to Saint-Tropez, was, once more, interesting. The weather ran true to all the forecasts, with no gradient wind in the morning, just a slowly building onshore breeze until a late afternoon shift to a south-westerly. Dainty was very slow to cross the 11am start line and there was no more than 5 knots for the first hour as we headed on starboard take out to find a sea breeze. We actually sailed at right angles, or worse, to the rhumb line to Saint-Tropez and could even enjoy the sight of the Lerin monastery in Golfe Juan, to the East!

It was also fun, after an hour and a half and as the Southerly gradually built, to be crossing tacks - and once overtaking - Cambria. For the next two hourso0ur satnav recorded speeds of 4 to 5 knots as we fetched past the most beautiful yellowy brown cliffs of the Cap Roux range, silhouetted in front of bright white thermal clouds.

Half way, off Cap Dramont the wind increased to at least 20 knots and the sea became rough. Jeremy Parker took the helm. Before the La Seiche à Huile entrance to the Saint-Tropez Golfe the wind did as forecast and made us have to tack to windward for the last hour and a half of the race. It was frustrating to find that what would have been an excellent result on handicap was spoilt by the faster boats finishing before the wind had headed them.

The customary reliance on the Michelin tray provided an excellent record of our navigation.

It was good to have finished by 6pm and with crew and *Dainty* in good order.


24 SEPTEMBRE - 8 OCTOBRE 2022
Les Voiles
de
Saint-Tropez
PROGRAMME
ANIMATIONS À TERRE

Lay Day Monday then the mistral blew for two more days. We even “shortened sail” on the mooring and took down the beautiful but huge banner of Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez 2022.

Sally and Christine at Les Voiles regatta centre

Dainty Soirée: Nothing, though, would prevent us from holding *Dainty*'s traditional sunset party on the Tuesday. While the storm did not just rattle the rigging of the great classic yachts beside us but actually roared, our guests had to hold their drinks in both hands.

Friends from *Josephine, Alcyon* and *Oriole* join John and Gladys Slatter, Lesley, Sally and Christine

Simon, Mike, Lesley, Christine, Sally and Peter

<u>An Ambition Realised:</u> Dainty to sail out of Saint-Tropez under the banner of the Gstaad Yacht Club for their unique race, only for 100-year-old yachts

Eleven years ago, the Gstaad Yacht Club, of all places, established on the Thursday of Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez an annual fleet race uniquely only for 100-year-old boats. Though there is no record of just when Dainty was built, just that of the 9th October 1922 meeting and the August 1923 Cowes Week with six Solent Sunbeams, it is reasonable to suggest that she was built in the winter of 1922-3.

Anyway, we were delighted to receive a formal invitation to take part in the race, to the film show and reception the day before and to the post-race dinner at the magnificent La Bouillabaisse restaurant.

At the cinema Shirley Robertson showed a beautiful film she had made of last year's race.
Then Bruno Troublé gave a speech welcoming the new addition, the tiny *Dainty* that had been trailed across France and he said a lot of nice things about the owners and crew. At the raclette reception that followed Bruno and the Commodore of Gstaad YC, Manrico Iachia, raised their glasses to *Dainty* and Shirley expressed an interest in helping us produce a film record of the class's centenary celebrations next year.

The actual race the next day, when Simon Perkins joined us, was in champagne sailing sunshine and about 18 knots, mainly on a reach out to a buoy round the La Basse Rabiou, while enjoying close quarters view of the other 24 very beautiful competitors.
It provided Simon Perkins and Kathy Mansfield with some good photo opportunities.

Kathy Mansfield's photo

NY6 Spartan at our rounding mark

Dione, just after the finish

Emilia

Mike, Peter and Simon

11th GYC Centenary Trophy

Thursday, 29th September 2022

Final Results – Order of arrival

Place	Sail No / *Numéro de voile*	Yacht Name / *Nom*	Year/ Année	Arrival time *L'heure d'arrivée*
1	K 1898	KISMET	1898	14 : 22 : 08
2	BH 12	SKUD	1903	14 : 25 : 45
3	NY 11	ORIOLE	1905	14 : 26 : 26
4	F 3	MARGA	1910	14 : 26 : 53
5	NY 6	SPARTAN	1913	14 : 27 : 50
6	C 4	JAP	1897	14 : 28 : 13
7	P 14	OLYMPIAN	1913	14 : 30 : 56
8	P 13	CHIPS	1913	14 : 32 : 24
9	14	SUMURUM	1914	14 : 33 : 38
10	V 1	DAINTY	1922	14 : 34 : 58
11	1912	DIONE	1912	14 : 35 : 02
12		SHENANDOAH of SARK	1902	14 : 37 : 17
13	P 5	CORINTHIAN	1911	14 : 38 : 28
14	7 C	LULU	1897	14 : 41 : 15
15	CAG 15	VERONIQUE	1907	14 : 43 : 48
16	N	NIN	1913	14 : 48 : 23
17	CAG 36	WIKI	1920	14 : 58 : 34
18	9	SKY	1890	14 : 59 : 13
19	O 16	GAUDEAMUS	1914	15 : 01 : 11
20	1874	MADCAP	1874	15 : 22 : 15
21	H 31	ESTEREL	1912	DNS

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For more information, please visit
www.gyccentenarytrophy.com

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Mike and Peter enjoyed an outstanding YC de Gstaad dinner at La Bouillabaisse, with even more compliments being paid to Westmacott's 100-year-old design.

Piped:

Elena is 55 m long. Her mast must be at least 50 m.
As she motored up to moor near *Dainty*, stern-to in the old port, a crew member was hoisted in a boson's chair to the top spreader. He was a bagpiper with his Breton bagpipes. He played loudly and beautifully as Elena slowly turned round and docked. Every sailor and spectator in the harbour applauded.
Some cried out "encore"!

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View from Le Sube. Can Shenandoah fit? Only just. Fenders had to be singled.

Party at La Ponche

Les Voiles Friday. At last, a race in Les Voiles. Dainty failed to find the start line and gave the fleet a five-minute lead. But this turned out to be no handicap, as we could see them all struggling in very light winds to our right, so we could head left to find a south-easterly for the five mile beat out to sea. On the downwind leg back to the finish the breeze fortunately held for us after the faster boats had finished. This helped us pick up a surprising 2nd place.

Puritan

Les Voiles Saturday the forecast return of the mistral in the afternoon tested *Dainty*'s procedures and skills for handling heavy weather.

1. All crew recently checked lifejackets and had shown how they could use our VHF and flares.
2. The boat's electric pump was turned on that morning after a fresh battery had been fitted. It does not work properly on a battery with just half a charge.
3. Both reef lines were rigged, through Dainty's in-boom system.
4. Reefed early. There was only light wind as we left port and the race officer had scheduled an early start on a "short race to get us home before the next mistral hit. "It actually blew up before the start and we thought of retiring. Mike had been promised that we would not go racing in more than20 knots. Despite it being puffy, we jointly decided to put one reef in and join the race. For the first leg of about six miles eastwards past Issambres, off Frejus and towards Ile de Lion we were able to fly, with that one reef, the little Sunbeam spinnaker. Much of the time our reef left us under canvassed compared with our competitors, but it was plenty in the gusts.
5. The second "get you home" reef (already set) was skilfully taken in on way back by Mike and Simon, reducing the mainsail's area from 200 sq. ft to probably less than 100 sq. ft. The wind blew up past 25 knots, past 30 and past 35, with short, steep seas. A competitor recorded a gust of 41. Though the bow wave splashed up into the helmsman's eyes, *Dainty* was battered but not bruised and nothing broke. Westmacott's brilliantly designed Sunbeam stayed dry.
   The manual pump was used just once for a minute or so, no more, and electric pump made sure there was never enough water over the floor boards to use buckets.
   After a three hour beat to windward, we safely crossed the finishing line off Saint-Tropez, receiving applause from those on the committee boat!

We were wrong to accept the forecast timing of the mistral and the race officer's implied confirmation, saying he would get us home before the weather broke. The mistral actually blew in at the earliest forecast, 12 noon. Never believe that the Race Officer knows more than you do.
We probably should have acknowledged the risk and stayed ashore.

As it turned out, on handicap, with kind Alan Stannah's excellent second-hand mainsail, we beat boats that had been over-canvassed and got a 4th place.
With just these two races to count we were on the podium, a second year only beaten by Harold Cudmore's fully rebuilt and well handicapped Fyfe called *Jap* [Irish for" splash"].

Lift out by the efficient and friendly Alex Arman, with Simon Perkins who had kindly stayed on to help us pack the boat and mast on the trailer.

The Trip home was carefully planned to avoid refugee stops, with the last stop at Chauffeur Les Bonners, almost three hours' drive from the port
We rejected the suggestion of posting a large notice on Dainty's topsides, "Immigrants: Cash Only." Close inspection by Border Force was encouraged, both at Caen and at Portsmouth.

It had been the most enjoyable and most successful of all of Dainty's 17 trips to the Mediterranean.

This is thanks to those onboard, Mike Hollis, Dave Giffard, Christine Graves, Jeremy Parker and Simon Perkins, fully supported by the shore team of Lesley Hollis and Sally Nicholson.

We are most grateful for the invitations from Jean-Pierre Gailes, Commodore of Y C de Cannes, Pierre Ronso, President of S N de Saint-Tropez and Manrico Iachia, Commodore of the Gstaad Y C. The organisation for *Dainty* was helped considerably by the skill, hard work and patience of their administrators, Karine Grené, Frederique Fantino and Cindy Schonrich.

2,400 words; 8,600 KB

Peter Nicholson, 16 October 2022
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