



## Celebrating with Spinnaker Lodge

June 2019

Crew: Lynda

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Spinnaker Lodge is for “boaters” of all sorts and meets conventionally twice a year on the Mainland with three weekend meetings at different locations in the Solent. They’re a sort of rally but how you get there is up to you, the only important requirement is to have a well-stocked fridge!

The June meeting coincided with a celebration of the 150th year anniversary of Hampshire and IOW Province with a Grand Ball in Cowes making a rather special weekend. We managed to book berths right in front of the hall where the ball was held promising to make the Spinnaker fleet the centre piece of the early part of the celebrations.



On the Friday we loaded up Lively Levante with plenty of stores together with a blazer for the afternoon meeting and Dinner dress for the Ball, then set off. The crossing to

Cowes was uneventful, in fact we motored much of the way as there was little wind and we were keen to get there in good time. Once off West Cowes Marina we called them up and found we were one of the first so had a prime position adjacent to the walkway onto the pontoon. Mooring up and turning Lively Levante around was easily arranged with the help of a couple of fellow masons that had arrived a few minutes earlier.



Gradually the area we had been allocated filled up with a variety of yachts and motor boats so there was plenty of wandering around and hopping on board for cups of tea or something stronger. We’d decided to go to the Royal Ocean Racing Club for a quiet dinner that evening which turned out to be a good choice, we were well looked after and had a pleasant meal to set us up for the weekend’s festivities.

We had a good start to Saturday with breakfast at Jolliffes, thier eggs Benedict were just right. When we returned to Lively Levante it was time to prepare for the celebrations which meant being dressed over all! Having raided the attic, we had plenty of flags that we’d already

prepared for the big hoist. Fortunately, the weather was cooperative, sunny and not too windy, so we had no difficulty in getting ready. Every boat actively participated so the fleet really looked the part, all ready to party! Conveniently another Contessa from Hardway Sailing club slipped in alongside us at the last minute.



After a light lunch we got dressed up in Blazers, white shirts, chinos and deck shoes then set off for the lodge meeting at the Medina lodge temple in the centre of Cowes. It's rather nice to dress up especially as most events are informal now. The meeting went well, not that we tried to do much, and unsurprisingly was well attended. Nobody hung around, the lure of the pontoon party was far too great.



Once back in the marina the wine bottles came out and we did our best to entertain the many other folk that had joined Spinnaker Lodge including the Provincial Grand Master and many of the Provincial executive. As the biggest boat there, Lord Fyfe hosted more than anyone else and tended to be the centre of attention; it was soon overflowing! There were plenty of other get-togethers on other yachts and motorboats to add to the fun. The pontoon didn't sink but certainly was low in the water, especially around the tables with the food that we'd all contributed to.



The wives, who always get together during these weekends, were not going to be left out and were certainly up to the occasion by being the heart and soul of the party. It was a great start to the evening enjoyed by all.

It could have carried on for much longer but we were all conscious of the ball and having to pace ourselves if we were to last the evening out. A short interlude followed allowing a change of dress and preparation for the main event which was to be a dinner, then a "last night of the proms" performed by the Royal Marines Association Band followed by a disco until the early hours.

With 300 attending, the events hall was comfortably full but still able to put on an excellent dinner, enjoyed by all. Once the band got started the flags came out and the fun began, there was an explosion of noise from confetti canons, singing and laughter. The post horn gallop was the centrepiece, an amazing feat that stunned everyone.





As the band performance came to a close there was a short pause before the disco set a change of pace. Just about everyone was attracted onto the dance floor and kept the party going with some great music.

All too soon it was over and time to return to our boats. All in all a great evening that was thoroughly enjoyable so not surprising that tickets had sold out in 20 minutes; fortunately Spinnaker Lodge had a generous allocation!

For some the merriment continued on board, others just crashed out!

Sunday morning was a bit quiet to start off with but the fleet gradually came alive again. After another breakfast, this time at The Coast we were ready to face the world once more. High water was at 11:40 so it made sense to set off for the return trip without delay so after many goodbyes we left for Gosport. Again, not much wind but this time from behind us so we unfurled the genoa and had a pleasant drift over to Gilcker and Royal Clarence Yard.

