

# REVELATIONS



the newsletter of the  
**Morning Star Trust**

## Editorial

Welcome to the June issue of Revelations. As usual, I need to apologise for its late arrival, this time coursework deadlines!

In the absence of any adverse comments relating to the new format of Revelations and distribution by email we will continue to use this method for distribution as much as possible as it reduces the workload in the office. However, if you would rather a hard copy to be sent to you, please let the office know.

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this issue, including news of what has been going on in the early part of the season and accounts of two trips. There is also the concluding part of the history of Morning Star.

If you are off sailing this summer then I hope that you have a great time, and if you felt like making any contribution for future issues, (stories, pictures, photos, poems, thoughts, etc) then please do send them in to the office.

Finally, I would like to thank Catherine who will be stepping in as guest editor for the September Revelations as I will be away.

Will

## A mid-week weekend for MS...

Some months ago our Chairman came up with the idea of organising a mid week sailing voyage aboard Morning Star. The aim of this 'mid-week weekend' was to provide some

## June 2003

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breathing space for a number of hard working clergymen, these being friends and contacts of Oliver's. As his contacts only numbered three, the net was thrown out more widely to encompass Christian leaders in general, particularly those who had shown an interest in MS.

It was not long before the planned trip had turned into a wider promotional opportunity drawing six clergy and one youth worker. The question remained, "how would they all get on?"

On the evening of May 13<sup>th</sup> Steve kept a look out as Nick set to work to prepare the evening meal of 'Spag Bol'. Undeterred by the usual train delays, enough of the group arrived to begin consuming the evening meal. There was a definite air of excitement and anticipation amongst the group by the time safety briefings had been conducted and the plan of action discussed.

All rose early on Wednesday for breakfast, prepared as usual by the crew and who could resist saying "more Tea vicar?" We were still along side Thunderbolt pier at this point as we were waiting for one late comer.

Following a 'thought for the day' from Steve the crew were quickly organised and left the mooring by 09.00. Being 'men of the cloth' the vicars made light work of hoisting the sails and all were keen to get stuck in. By lunch we were well out into the Thames Estuary. The wind was slowly increasing and we were enjoying a steady 6 knots. This crew were no less hungry for speed than any other and so hours of fun was had teaching them how to change the foresails and thread the topsails. By the afternoon a solid bank of menacing cloud was approaching, before it came hail and then the wind. The leisurely morning sail had progressed into a roaring force 7 squall. It all looked and sounded very dramatic with MS heeling over and washing her gunnels as Ollie and Nick scrambled to drop the headsails. Our clergy friends were clearly loving it, with the Baptists feeling slightly more at home with the drenching than the Anglicans. The quirky weather continued until late afternoon when we were becalmed and finally had to motor to our mooring at Harty Ferry.

The evening took on a very jolly and relaxed feel after the day's excitement. The experience had completely gelled the group and all were busy in conversation. The evening was idyllic with the clear sky and the sun low and orange on the horizon. A final workout for the day was provided by Nick when he announced he wished to be hoisted up the mast to take some pictures. Due to the relatively small number aboard, food was in plentiful supply ensuring generous portions for everyone. A full and very

satisfied crew retired to their bunks that night.

Up bright and early Thursday morning, and it was breakfast on the go for the volunteers on deck whilst Oliver shared a thought for the day. Time was short owing to the early finish time of 15.00. The decision was made to return the way we came, rather than proceed up the Swale with a lack of tide. The day was warm and sunny with no wind to speak of providing a very leisurely start to the day. It was not until a few miles before Sheerness that the wind returned. The crew, keen as mustard, hoisted everything we had and as we entered the Medway on a run, even the Mizzen Staysail went up. This provided considerable entertainment as this large sail had to be dropped every time we Gybed up the channel. Rising to the challenge, our ordained crew worked hard to perfect the Gybing procedure. Considering this was their first time aboard MS, one could not help but be impressed.

'It's all over too soon', this was the overall feeling and the feedback from the crew as we docked. The midweek weekend had clearly gone very well for all concerned. One can only hope and pray that this time spent will bare fruit for the future.

The following are some of the comments received:

*'It was a splendid trip and I thoroughly enjoyed myself'.*

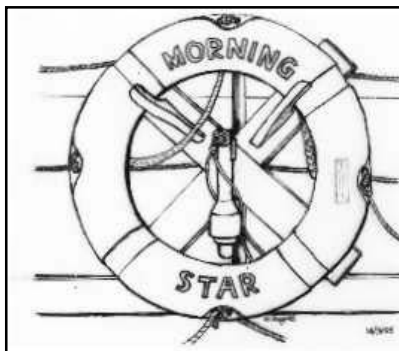
*'Morning Star is a tremendous ship and concept'.*

*'It was wonderful to see a venture based on Christian principles that is so attractive to a wide cross section of society, and one which seeks to reach out in such an inoffensive way'.*

## Back in the office...

There is plenty going on with regards to funding at the moment. Earlier in the month we were visited by the Jerusalem Trust. This is the personal charitable fund of Sir Timothy Sainsbury. Their primary aim is the promotion of the Christian faith by supporting Christian evangelism, media, education and social concern.

The Trust states that generally, unsolicited applications are not successful. So you can imagine our surprise when we receive a letter asking if their administrator and a trustee could pay us a visit. The visit took place on the 12<sup>th</sup> May and went very well by all accounts, we initially received them in the office and later Libby prepared a nice lunch aboard MS. The funding we are seeking



through them is for the support of both Steve Thompson and an administrators salary. Please join with us to pray this funding in, we will know if we have been successful by the end of July.

This month we have also received a total of £6500 in grant support. Fifteen hundred was from the Girdlers' Company for new oilskins and Five thousand towards the replacement for Eagles Wings from the Clothworkers' Foundation. Regarding the new boat fund, this means we have now raised 45% of the £45,800 budget.

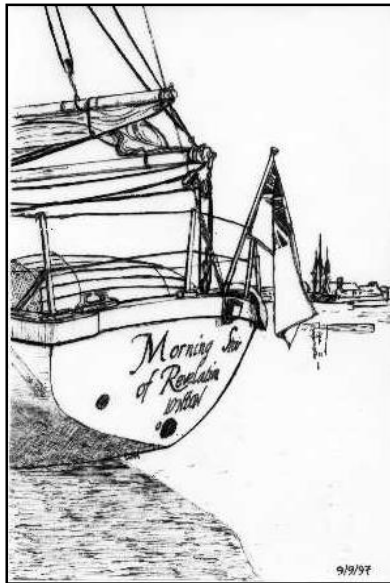
Interestingly, the Jerusalem Trust recommended that we re-apply

to the Rochester Bridge Trust regarding the new boat after a failed attempt late last year. We received a letter from them last week saying that the application satisfied their criteria and were placing before the members for consideration. Please pray over this application too.

## And on the boat...

The Final Push to get MS ready to go was somewhat fraught and hectic, many cosmetic jobs having to be left until a break later in the season. No one on Skippers Weekend seemed to notice though, as there were other cosmetic matters to discuss! Tim and Steve have spent a considerable chunk of the last few weeks finishing off the re-rigging. The shrouds and stays all had to be coated in a coat of linseed oil to protect them from the elements, which involved Tim being hauled up and down the masts and gracefully flitting from one side of the boat to the other, like something out of the Millennium Dome air show. Whilst flitting, large amounts of linseed oil splattered themselves liberally all over the decks, which are awaiting a rather major overhaul in the latter part of this week.

On deck, we have managed to finish off all of the cockpit work, started by Lynda Key and Sara Millward during the winter work parties. Two lads from Fairbridge have been down to help out, Chris Collinson becoming something of a regular contact at the centre and doing a rather fine paint job on the mainmast 'skirt' that protects the base. The main peak and throat halyards (amongst others) have been replaced with lovely new soft rope, and the mizzen tabernacle has been repainted, to show off the freshly varnished mizzen mast.



## Adventures of a Tiger Thing: May 2003

by Catherine Bertrand

If you have been reading Revelations this year, then you will have read about my previous skippering exploits on board Eagles Wings with Libby in November. After not running aground/having any major incidents/dying, Tim was suitably confident to let me take Tiger Moon for a spin with my own crew after an intensive training course with some other Morning Star Second Mate up-and-comings.

The weather got grimmer and grimmer as the training course progressed...

By Thursday, the day my crew were arriving, the murk had settled in comfortably and spattered continuously on me and Chris Sims while we brought Tiger Moon into the marina. By lunchtime the rain was drumming on the roof and dribbling smugly down the windows. My crew, however, were not to be put off.

"We want to go sailing!" they exclaimed, eyes ashine, hair dry, clothes unrumpled. Well, most of them did, the wise ones said nothing. I was feeling a trifle reckless, first command and everything, and besides, Sutton Yacht Harbour does have some of the best showers in this half of the known world. So, having dressed everyone up like Tellytubbies in Tiger moon's oversized nautical wardrobe, and with a double reef in the main and a scrap of jib, we plunged out through the lock into the white crested water of the Sound.

"Wahey!" yelled Julian and Adam, both thoroughly enjoying their time at the helm, while the water ran thick and fast down our faces and through our hair. Sarah said nothing, a quiet and huddled bundle looking most serene at the back of the boat.

Paul looked bemused. Lynda, in her first role as mate on Tiger Moon, was fantastic, scurrying about making hot drinks, checking everyone was alright, doling out harnesses. I was most impressed.

After a couple of hours we were all getting a bit cold, and there's only so many times you can explain how to tack and jibe, so we turned tail and ran for home. Unfortunately I was so wound up about getting through the lock in one piece, that I rather jumped the queue and got revved at (having muffed the manoeuvre anyway) by a small fishing boat containing a gruff and disgruntled looking gentleman. Ah well, we'd probably be able to sneak out while he wasn't looking the next day.

Everyone had showers and Julian prepared a feast, so we sat, contentedly, ignoring the percussive of the rain on the deck, in the gentle light of the oil lamp. (And the lights, as the oil lamp would appear to have got dimmer than my memory recollects.)

Friday, the weather was still with us. We were now a full compliment, Yie, our final crew member having arrived to the sound of much reedy pennywhistling and strummed guitar in the depths of the rain soaked evening. Again, with the promise of hot showers to spur us on, I took my crew for another bash in the sound and around the breakwater. The people at the lock must have heard about our queue-jumping of the day before, as we were alongside an enormous 'beamer' fishing vessel.

"Ere, we thought we'd let you go out furrust." Motioned the fisherman in broad Cornish. "We'ed 'ate to 'ave to use you as a fenderrrr."

"Too right!" I thought, and off we shot.

Below decks, AGAtha the cooker has been causing us a few worries. Due to the nature of the stainless finish, cleaning her has been a bit of a nightmare as no abrasives are meant to be used, (although despite large notices, this didn't deter certain persons from having a go anyway!) Thankfully Sara seems to have come up with a failsafe, (and scratchsafe) method of cleaning her which will be employed in the ensuing weeks.

Peace has returned to the galley after the gas alarm, which had been particularly raucous recently, was fixed after Tim discovered a dead connection (which the manufacturers had not). Steve has fought with gravity and fixed all of the wobbly floors in the saloon and forecabin, and Tim managed to make the aft cabin floor slightly less lumpy. The aft heads door is no longer falling to bits, and having taken it off its hinges to fix the frame, Steve thought he might as well varnish it too.

We are trying to get MS looking really smart for the summer, the gallows and the decks being the next major projects to be completed. Hopefully she will look as smart as the leadership once the new jackets come back from the embroiderers!

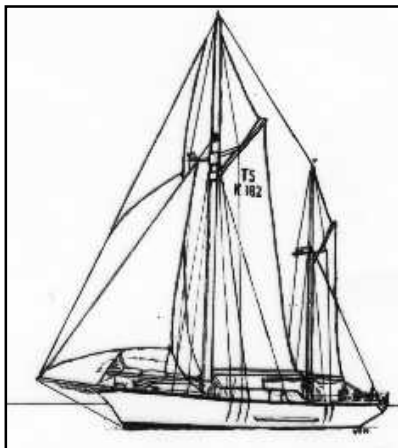


tide was a little bit lower. The wind had changed direction however, and although the water was glassy, there was enough power in the wind to set us back onto the shore we had so gleefully scrambled up earlier. I checked the almanac. I knew it was Springs, but I couldn't remember what time low water was. 2am. I glanced at the ships chronometer. 2am. Ah. Right. Yie peered sleepily out of the cabin.

"Is everything alright?"

"No. No, I'm afraid everything is definitely NOT alright."

Now, with hindsight, having been laughed at by Tim and Steve, both experienced skippers who have run aground and survived a thousand times, perhaps I did panic a bit. But standing there in my pyjamas, in the dark, on a boat filled with some of my closest friends, the prospect of running them aground on a lee shore in somebody else's boat on my first expedition as skipper did not make me feel all calm and floaty inside.



"We've got to move. We've got to move Now." I said, dashed up and turned on the engine. My first thought was that the steering had broken again, until I realised that I had merely put the steering lock on in my zeal earlier. Yie woke up Adam, while I motored gently forwards. I wasn't sure how long Tiger Moon had been grumping against the shore before I woke up, and I was terrified that she wouldn't move

forward when I asked her to. But she did.

It only took a few moments. I woke up some more crew to lend a hand, lifted the anchor, motored forward a few metres, and dropped it again. The nasty, scary, grumping noise had stopped, and the only sound which I could swear everyone could hear, was the thumping of my heart, beating as if to escape from my chest.

"Sorry about that everybody. You can go back to bed now."

We settled back down to sleep. I set my alarm for every hour to check that either we had enough water, or that we didn't have too much and were dragging our anchor out into the Sound. However, I was so on edge that every creak, every groan, every whisper of every wave had me alert and listening, so I really didn't need an alarm clock as I didn't manage to get much more sleep.

Sunday was uneventful. It rained, (surprise) and we had another bash around in the Sound before returning Tiger Moon to her berth for the last time. To my amazement, everyone was eager to know when the next trip was going to happen.

I am sure it has been said before, but you can only learn to be a skipper by skippering. I would recommend it to anyone, especially if you have a fantastic mate like Lynda and a willing and able crew. Despite the traumas of Saturday, I felt that God was very close in both situations. If I had had a perfect trip, I would have got far too confident and dismissive about the experience, but there were enough incidents for me to feel I had really achieved and learnt something, and more than enough happy memories to make me really want to go back and do it again.

## The history of Morning Star (Part 5)

*The final part of a transcript of an interview with Tim Millward by Clive Miller*

### ***Does she sail all year round?***

Not so far. We usually finish at the end of October and start again in the middle of March.

### ***So what happens in the winter?***

We work very hard to mend and improve the boat, ready for the next time, which is a surprising amount of work.

### ***Do you ever need help in the winter?***

Yes.

### ***What do you have to do to become a mate?***

Well, there's an ideal answer, and an answer in the real world. The ideal answer is we look for people who have been in and out of boats their whole lives, and have been knocked around in a whole variety of sailing situations, including sail training if possible. We're obviously looking for people who are committed Christians, and are keen to share their Faith, rather than just to go sailing. You're allowed to enjoy sailing, but that is not the primary reason for being part of Morning Star. In terms of actual paper qualifications, we need people to work through a variety of qualifications. Certainly a first mate needs to have a Coastal Skipper certificate with a commercial endorsement, and there are all sorts of add-on bits and pieces which make a person increasingly valuable. The skipper needs to be an Offshore Yachtmaster. It's important to realise that it's not just by gaining bits of paper from the RYA that you could be a sail training mate onboard Morning Star. There's a whole question of whether your personality is appropriate, whether you have this range of experience, whether you have a heart for young people, and so

on. There's no closed-ended answer to that. The qualifications are necessary but not sufficient.

**Why is she called 'Morning Star of Revelation'?**

In about 1979, when the boat was launched, Sara and I were trying to think about names for boats and at an evening meeting (it was a housegroup, but not attached to a Church). We sang what was a popular chorus at the time, "Jesus, how lovely you are, you shine as the Morning Star", and I just thought "oh, there's a name". We had been working around names of that sort, but it hadn't quite clicked. So it was as though God said "it will be Morning Star". So that was alright, but we knew that if we wrote to the register of British Shipping and said we want to register this thing in the name of *Morning Star*, they'd write back and say well you can't have that because we've got 20 of those on our books already! So we deliberately thought up something a bit more complicated and less usual, and one of the chief Bible references to Morning Star is where Christ himself, speaking at the end of the book of Revelations says "I am the bright and Morning Star", in the old version. So, it became *Morning Star of Revelation*, which has certainly caused people to ask, "Why is it called that?", which is a fairly useful opening. We wrote to the register of British Ships, and surprise, surprise, he wrote back and said "The name Morning Star of Revelation is available" so it became.

**Thought for the quarter**  
**Making plans...**

I am currently in a situation where I am making a lot of plans to get things organised for the short-term future. This started me thinking about making plans and whether there is a

specifically Christian response to planning. This thought does not pretend to arrive at any earth shattering answers, it is just some thoughts on the subject...

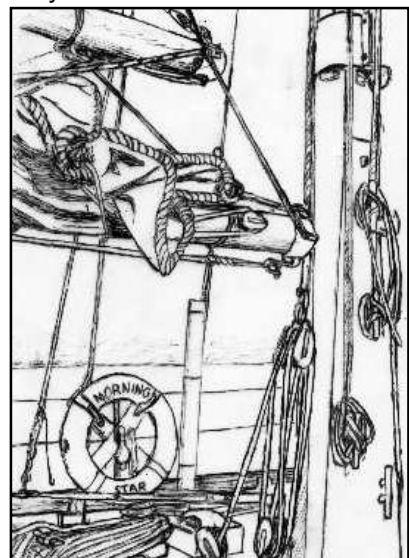
At one end of the spectrum is Jesus' teaching in the gospels, telling us not to worry about our life, what we will eat or drink, and so on (Matthew 6:25-34) and 'Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.' (verse 34) At one level this might appear to say that we needn't worry about the future and make plans because we don't need to – God will provide for us as he does the birds of the air or the lilies of the field.

At the other end of the spectrum is the fact that God has given us common sense and the ability to think for ourselves and help ourselves to meet our material requirements. The story comes to mind of the man who was stranded in rising flood waters and because of his belief that God would save him from drowning, declined the assistance of a man in a boat and a helicopter that would have lifted him to safety. After he had drowned and got to heaven, he asked God why he did not save him and God replied that he had tried to do so, by sending the boat and the helicopter. The point being that we should realise that God does require us to use our own initiative and things of the world to meet our needs.

So how do we balance these two views? On the one hand, we should not get caught up worrying about tomorrow and by inference don't need to plan for the future, because God will provide if we have enough faith. On the other hand, God has given us the means to plan and organise things to meet our future needs. To illustrate this, it would be unwise for me not to 'worry' about contracting malaria whilst overseas, trusting that God would prevent me from getting

bitten by an infected mosquito and so not plan to take anti-malarial medication. On the other hand, I shouldn't think that because I will be taking anti-malarial tablets, I don't need God's provision to keep me from being contracting malaria.

If there is an answer to this, it lies in what I think the point of Jesus' teaching on worrying about the future is, namely the need to seek the kingdom of God first in all things (Matthew 6:33). If we do this rather than striving to do everything in our own strength, we will not run the risk of losing sight of God and ultimately failing in our endeavours. At the same time we should not deny the ability and worldly provisions that God gives us to enable us to plan for the future in a God focused way.



**And finally...**

The following was spotted in a Royal Navy Submarines careers brochure:

"Q: WHAT DO THE CREW DO IN THEIR SPARE TIME?"

"A: The main off-watch tasks are eating and sleeping, and most experienced submariners can be relied upon to carry out these tasks to a high standard."