

## THE JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS AT COWES

### A report by Liz Dodwell (High Barbaree)

Fairly early on **Thursday 14<sup>th</sup>** we motored into Cowes Yacht Haven and joined 16 of the Round Britain Boats, and about 200 others for the party to celebrate the OGA's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. That evening Else and I performed my version of Summertime for the Open Mike challenge for a 'new' shanty, and I accompanied Claudia, Else and Mary singing Claudia's versions of Mud, Mud and These are the Days, my Friends. There was some very good music that night but we found things got a bit too loud for us the following two nights.



On **Friday** Brian Hammett and the East Coast ran a regatta in and near the marina, much like they did in Ipswich. This time as well as hotly disputed sculling races and the dog show which Koosche entered, it concluded with a clog boat race! Ric from Cine Mare had challenged each area of the OGA to convert a basic clog into a sailing boat and six beautiful models appeared. There was some dispute about the rules and who actually won but the Solent Area claimed the honours and the winning boat, made by Mike Warren, was auctioned for £150 in aid of the RNLI and acquired by Mike Shaw, our national president. Later Mary from Minstrel was thrilled to buy the Dutch clog-boat for £50.



**Saturday** was to be the big race when the organisers had hoped for a record entry of gaffer boats but it was not to be thanks to strong winds. Only 85 of the 120+ boats entered crossed the start line and 28 of these retired. Our neighbour David and friend Geoff crewed with us and we had a challenging and enjoyable sail! The Thames barge Alice raced as did our friends Pat and Lesley Morrish on the ex-West-country trading ketch, Irene



Beagle on the left – same hull as us but ketch rig



Capraia, RBC boat from Wales



Thames barge Alice



Irene on the left

On **Sunday** we had a pleasant farewell session for the Round Britain Challenge boats with songs by Else and David from Syene. Then we left with a falling tide and easily made it up the Beaulieu River to our home mooring, to prepare for a small party of fellow RBC crews and our neighbours David and Janette. Not so easy later when Witch, Minstrel and Windbreker had an unpleasant and slow crossing with strong winds, a rising tide and three cruise liners coming down the Solent. Unfortunately, or was it fortunately, our big car wouldn't start so David helped Tim taxi people late from their boats and I had an extra hour to prepare supper! We had a lovely evening starting with celebratory bubbles. Dutch Molly stayed the night with us, catching a train and plane the next day, while the three boats continued on their way home, Capraia and Minstrel still needing to complete their round Britain cruise when they get to Milford Haven.