

Another fabulous annual meeting – 2019’s AGM was hosted in Helsinki by Esa Vesmanen and his amazing band of helpers who organised a wonderful weekend for more than 80



members and their guests – coming from seven different countries around the world. We began the programme with a fascinating guided tour of the centre of the city, gathering at the statue of Alexander II in Senate

Square (the one Russian Czar for whom the Finns still hold some affection owing to reforms he enacted increasing Finland’s autonomy), viewing the cathedral and the Government Palace, before walking through the streets to the main station where we marvelled at the huge statues outside, then along the green Esplanade to the Market Square.

From here our (very chatty) guide Magdalena led us to the Relandersgrund Lightship for the Welcome Party.



Here we were welcomed by our hosts and treated to some very good nibbles and wine before heading out in various directions to sample the dining delights of Helsinki.

Saturday morning dawned early for some as about 20 hardy members gathered for the Sailor’s Yoga Class at 8.15 at the Helsinki Sailing Club (Helsingfors Segelsällskap HSS). This was followed by a hearty breakfast and the Skippers’ Briefing ahead of the AGM Race – this time combined with the Finnish Region’s annual “Eikka’s Beat” race. Eikkan Kryssi is organised each summer in memory of Eino Antinoja the master boatbuilder and sailor, and Honorary Life member of the Association until his death in 2010.

Seventeen stunning S&S yachts set out into a very foggy sea for the planned Midday start. Because of the weather a couple of other races planned for the morning had been delayed and so our start was put back – twice – and the siren eventually sounded about 12.30, by which time several boats weren’t quite sure where they – or the start line - were. But all came together and with a good steady wind and visibility coming and going an exciting race ensued. There were a few mishaps along the way of which least said soonest mended, but the skies cleared and the party ashore were able to watch as the beautiful *Prospect of Whitby* took line honours, closely followed by a steady stream of equally lovely vessels. With some careful handicap arithmetic going on in the background the final results were as follows:

Yacht	Class	FIN-LYS rating	Skipper	Sailed time	Corrected time
<i>Tarantella II</i>	Swan 37	1,17	Leif Ramm-Schmidt	3.04.23	3.35.44
<i>Prospect of Whitby</i>	One-off Admirals Cup	1,27	Hanno Narjus	2.50.54	3.37.03
<i>Inkeri</i>	S&S 6.6	1,10	Olli Martio	3.21.55	3.42.06
<i>Pepper III</i>	Swan 44	1,26	Tommi Uksila	2.57.33	3.43.43
<i>Sunchaser</i>	Swan 43	1,20	Jorma Eschner	3.08.25	3.46.06

The Eikka's Beat trophy was therefore awarded to Leif Ramm Schmidt of *Tarantella II*. The Annual Meeting Race Trophy which was initiated in Svendborg in 2015 was awarded for line honours to Hanno Narjus of *Prospect of Whitby* and a special prize of flowers was awarded to Dille and Barbara Meyer Fleckenstein who came 11th of the 14 finishers on *Jos of Hamble* for having travelled the furthest to participate in the race.

Then it was time to dash back to hotels, B&B's and boats to change for the gala evening. Back at the sailing club in their splendid, nautically-themed, circular dining room, we were welcomed by the Commodore Mikael Stelander and one of our sponsors from Climecon.

Our Chairman Rob Snoeks opened the evening with the traditional Founders' Cup toasts to the past and current hosts (Aud and Jon-Martin and Esa and Merita). An excellent meal was followed by the award of the trophies and other prizes for participants in the afternoon's race, and a brief presentation from Antti Muuronen on Tapio Lehtinen's recent completion of the 2018-19 Golden Globe Race in his S&S Gaia 36 *Asteria* 322 days alone at sea. Although coming in last of the finishers (largely owing to barnacles on the hull) Tapio was still a very commendable 5th of the 18 who started the race.

The formalities over we were treated to some seriously good tango music from Angelika Klas and her tango quartet followed by a somewhat more frivolous "lesson" in the Finnish tango from Sanna Tiivola, a longstanding member with her husband Jussi Lehtonen (*Ylva*). Dancing into the small hours closed the evening and we stumbled back to our boats or onto the ferry back the mainland.

Sunday dawned bright and sunny and we headed on the ferry to the island of Suomenlinna. The Island's sea fortress built across a cluster of seven islands, was built in the mid-1700s when Finland was part of Sweden and is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Magdalena returned to provide another interesting guided tour before we met in the Pajasali meeting room located in the cellar of the Crownwork Ehrensward. The building was constructed in 1786 and over the years, it has served as a smithy, bakery, barrel and window workshop, warehouse and now renovated as a conference centre.

The formal minutes of the AGM will be posted to the website soon but brief highlights included the award of the Global Challenge Cup to our Australian member, Shane Kearns of *Azzurro* for his success in the Australian Gold Coast Race, the decision to award Honorary Life membership to Tapio Lehtinen for his services to the S&S name, and an excellent presentation from our very own "S&S Professor" Lars Strom on the huge selection of S&S designs represented around the marinas, boatyards and anchorages of Finland.

Proceedings closed with lunch of the ultimately Finnish lunchtime soup - Lohikeitto – salmon, potatoes, dill and cream ... delicious, and we wended our way home after another happy gathering of S&S friends old and new.