

Rotafloat Report 2019/20

The Rotafloat objective for 2019 was to move the publication on line and to focus on future events rather than historical reports. Historically Rotafloat was a paper publication posted out to members which then migrated to an equivalent PDF version that could be emailed out to reduce printing and distribution costs. However a simple paper-equivalent PDF version can be difficult to browse, especially to locate items of geographic and technical relevance. An online version offered the possibility of indexing articles in a more accessible way, whilst making it easier to make updates and real-time changes to keep the content current. The main advantage was that rather than publishing a PDF document quarterly an online a web site could be continuously updated and kept up to date.

Ideally Rotafloat should be on the same web address as the main IYFR web site. However there were two practical problems. The first was gaining access to the IYFR web site with various levels of security and GDPR legislation. The second was actually authoring the web site pages, with an aim to avoid technical complexity and possibly the use (and cost) of professional agencies. For these reasons it was decided to go with a stand-alone web-site for Rotafloat (www.rotafloat.org) including built-in authoring software (Spanglefish).

The Rotafloat web site has thus evolved to start with a general welcome and introduction from the Commodore, followed by pages for each of the three geographical regions, plus some general pages at the end. The regional pages include a list of articles from that region which are then opened as individual new pages. The aim is to have full lists for each region, adding new articles to the top of the list, and retiring old articles from the bottom, keeping the number of articles in each list constant. Inspection of the web site shows that the lists are still incomplete and that the number of articles submitted from each region is very variable. It is appreciated that writing articles for events in the past can be tedious, but members are urged to supply these as they demonstrate what IYFR is all about, as well as being of interest to other members. A picture is always worth many words and avoids translation issues. So, more news articles please!

Long term the objective is to focus more on future events so that members can see what is going to happen and make arrangements to participate themselves. Ultimately this should become the most important page on the Rotafloat web site, but is critically dependent on members notifying the editor of their planned events in a timely manner. One of the main advantages of IYFR membership is perceived to be the opportunities it provides to sail or similar in regions, countries, and harbours which are not your own. Therefore, please remember to publicise your future events on Rotafloat!

Throughout links have been inserted in the Rotafloat web site to lead the reader back to the main IYFR web site. To date there have not been a lot of visits to the Rotafloat web site, presumably because the address (www.rotafloat.org) is still relatively unknown. Attempts to circulate this address through the IYFR email system ran into a number of difficulties (to be dealt with by others). Meanwhile, please publicise the web address to all members!

Finally and in conclusion, a last request to send all the information you can (words and pictures), especially future events, to Rotafloat. Articles can be submitted on the website itself or to the editor at andre@hawryliw.plus.com.