

## Report on some Dutch Drascombe activities 2017

Please find attached a report on some of the major events on and around Dutch Drascombes, partly to be found also (in Dutch) at the NKDE site, thanks to its editors and contributors. If you are interested in the whereabouts of some of the boats & crews, just enter <http://www.nkde.nl/reisverhalen-2017/> in your browser. Your correspondent is only reporting some of the major group events, not the undoubtedly pleasant trips we all must have had in our floating pastime.

For a few of us, the year started with the so-called Dry Smiscruise, a short one-day course to safely navigate the Waddensea at the home of Sytse Terpstra at Geldermalsen. For some of the new owners a very welcome opportunity to discuss the Waddensea peculiarities before practice. The spring meeting at the Museum Yard at Vreeswijk was THE opportunity to see each other again.



Practice came in May in which yours truly attended the East Smiscruise. Both the East and West Smiscruises are tributes to Hans Vandersmissen, the original writer and sailor on board Drascombe Cruiser Pride of the Fleet. This boat is now being restored and improved by his son Victor. The impression is from the East Smiscruise, starting at the Lauwersoog lock to the Waddensea. An admiral having ample area knowledge is always appointed for decision making, aiding strugglers and generally direct the fleet, this time Mr. Thomas Ietswaart leading.

This area is wide but rather shallow with sufficient tide to run a Drascombe dry, not much shipping, pleasant estuary channels. The weather was fabulous with some fog in the morning and afterwards a lovely sail along the south coast of Schiermonnikoog island. Coping with the lock is not too difficult if it is fully filled with Drascombes. A large steel traditional inland barge had to wait for them polyester ducks.



Summer came and with it came the 50 years Drascombe Jubilee. It was a feast and, not accustomed to driving on the left hand side of the road, your correspondent took the precaution to drive all along to Cherbourg in France and cross the Channel overnight with Brittany Ferries sitting at the bar with his coxswain. It is always great to explain the peculiarities of a Coaster to interested

parties waiting for the ferry. As you undoubtedly know, the event was very well organised with pleasant coastal sailing and good food & company, thanks to Sharon Geary-Harwood and Dick Pizey.



The Dutch have a so-called Summer Weekend 1-st of September, a yearly event at different places in the Netherlands. In 2017 it was at the inland and shallow Wieden-Weerribben area in the NE. The climate must be changing as the weather during the feeder was awful with much rain but the event was fabulous except for no wind. Photo Wim Oostra o/b Andromeda, organization by Anneke and José Oost.



More or less final event was the Traditional Wadden Weekend TWW in December , for diehards, with usually foggy and cold conditions. When the feeder was started, extensive warnings were given from the Dutch Meteo Institute for a Force 9 gale. Mr. Michel Maartens daily blog at

<https://www.nkde.nl/2017/10/27/blog-tww-2017/> reported it all to those who wisely stayed onshore. The picture is from the TWW blog 2017, Dulcibella

underway to Den Oever over the IJsselmeer, the storm approaching. In the end, the diehards were lucky in that the weather improved much. Yet, cold it must have been.



Essentially this ended the season for most of us, with during winter essential improvements planned at our boats. Your correspondent found bailing a bucket of water per day out of a Coaster under seagoing conditions a little too much. Luckily, Drascombe Nederland found the leak(s) after their so-called swamp test with the boat filled (properly supported) with water inside instead of outside and professionally repaired the center plate construction.



I wish you some very good sailing in 2018.

Henk Wels