

Hamble Week and Hamble Regattas

The first Hamble Week took place in 1997 as an attempt to revive the previous successful Hamble Regatta and to be a regular annual event similar to Cowes Week and Cork Week. The River Hamble Combined Clubs organised the sailing and water based events, while another volunteer committee led by Father John Travers organised the land based activities. These activities included an Old Hamble Photograph Exhibition based on the theme of past Regattas & Carnivals, a Boat Jumble and Flower Festival. There were special events in the local pubs & clubs each night and a market & other events took place on the Quay at the weekends.

Over the years Hamble Week evolved but not as anticipated as a major sailing event which would emulate to Cowes Week. Events such as 'Come & Get Wet', Crabbing Competition and the Soap Box Derby have become crowd pleasers, and the Beach Bar a regular feature.

Regattas at Hamble can be traced back to 1868. In that year the Hamble River Regatta took place on Tuesday 15th September, and it "was extensively patronised by the nobility, clergy, gentry and visitors in the neighbourhood". There were sailing races for pleasure boats and fishing boats, as well as races for rowing boats and punts. Similar to most other subsequent regattas, there was a band in attendance and the "day's sport was brought to a successful termination by a display of fireworks".

The Hamble River Regatta continued at Hamble and became a significant event in the area. Between the two World Wars many memorable 'one off' events were held in conjunction with the regatta such as a simulated 'Bullfight' and 'Circus'. Also for many years there was a Flower Show & Sports Day, usually held in Manor Farm's meadow.

In 1961 the Hamble River Regatta became Hamble Regatta & Carnival. A Carnival Queen was chosen at a selection dance and she was the main focal point of the carnival procession which paraded from the Mount Pleasant Recreation Ground to the Quay. Features such as floodlit formation sailing, a Donkey Derby and novelty aquatic events accompanied the popular sailing and rowing regattas.

Nearly every Hamble River Regatta, Hamble Regatta & Carnival and Hamble Week has had a fair (usually on the Village Green) and fireworks have traditionally brought the events to a close.

See 'Previous Meetings' for a report of a talk given to the Society about Hamble Regattas in June 2010