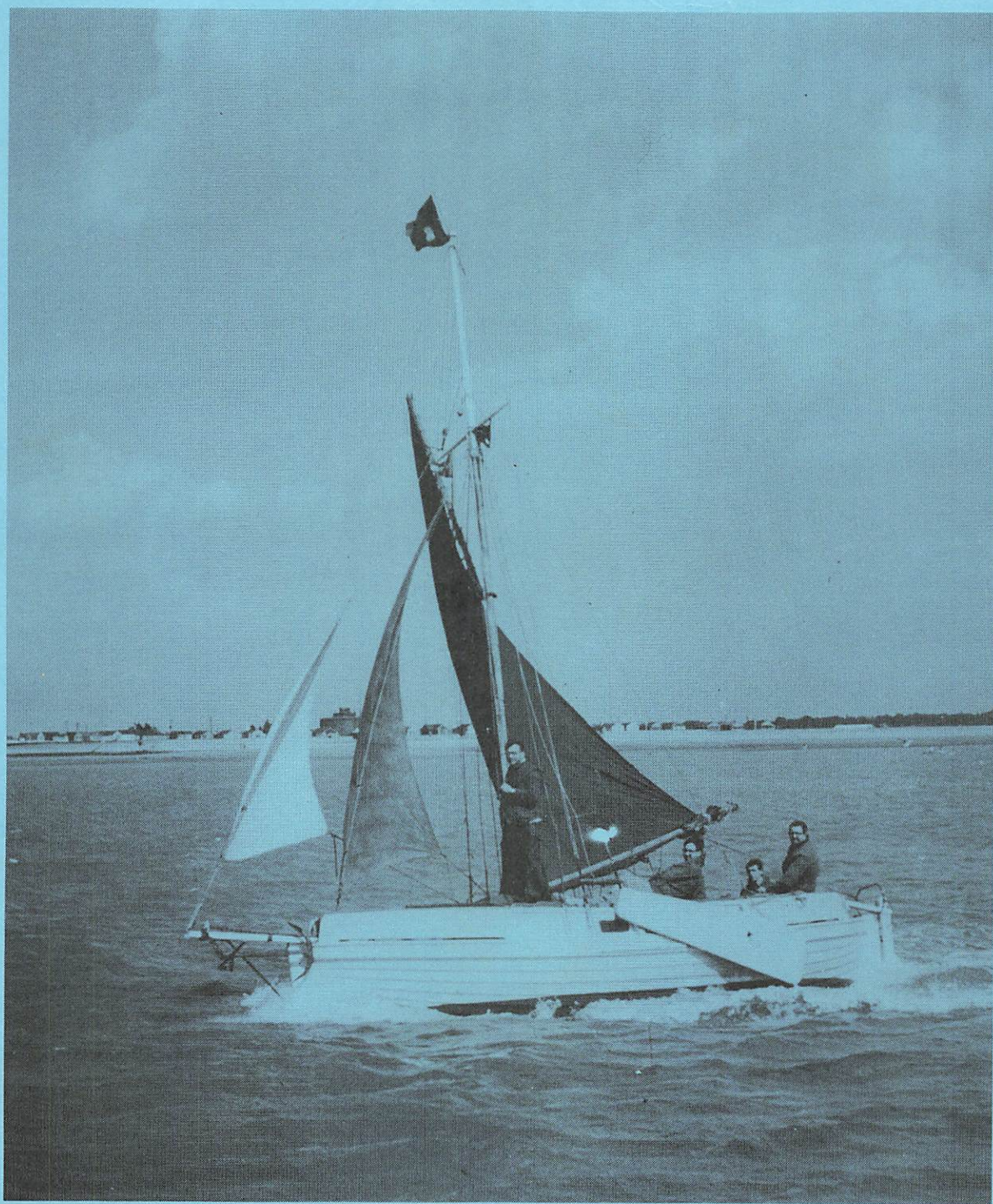


Old Gaffers Association Newsletter

77/2



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OLD GAFFERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER No. 1977/2

DIARY DATES

Saturday, July 23rd East Coast Race, Stone
Sunday, July 24th Rally at Folly Inn
August 4th - 8th Channel Islands Rally
August 10th - 14th St. Malo Regatta
Sunday August 21st N.E.Race, Amble
Saturday, Sept. 10th Solent Race
Sunday, Sept. 18th S.W.Race from Newton Ferrers to Salcombe
Saturday, Sept. 24th E.C.Seamanship trial & Rally at Bradwell
Saturday, Oct. 1st Rally at Cowes Corinthian Y.C.

COVER PICTURE

For this issue, we have a somewhat different type of gaffer from those we have featured in previous issues; a type of boat which was very much in the minds of the founders of the O.G.A.. She is Henrietta, a ship's lifeboat from the ship Trader II, built at Boom in Holland, and converted to a sailing boat with leeboards by Phil Dan of Wivenhoe.

Phil entered her in the 1963 East Coast Old Gaffers Race, and was one of the keen founder members of the O.G.A.. The lack of wind in 1963 forced her to retire, and again in 1964 the light winds were not to her liking - but Phil was determined to show off Henrietta's capabilities, and in the 1965 Race he got his chance, and Henrietta finished 22nd out of 40 - an excellent performance when one remembers that the T(H)CF handicapping system does not favour extreme shoal draft types.

Having shown that her racing performance in a reasonable breeze could be fairly matched against average Old Gaffers, Phil proceeded to repeat the performance in 1966, finishing 29th out of 49. 1967 saw an improvement to 27th out of 56, but 1968 brought light winds again, and Henrietta retired. 1969 saw Henrietta placed 58th out of 84, to win the newly donated Dulcibella Shield for the first converted lifeboat.

Phil Dan sold Henrietta after the 1969 Race, and unfortunately her new owner was not interested in Old Gaffers Races so her racing career lasted seven seasons, with three retirements and four very creditable placings.

The date of the cover picture is uncertain, but it was taken as Henrietta was storming up to the finishing line in either the 1965 or the 1966 East Coast Race.

At 24.5' L.O.A., Henrietta is a bit smaller than most converted lifeboats, but as the picture shows, the conversion resulted in a useful small cruising boat without the excessive tophamper one sometimes sees on conversions.

CROSSING THE BAR

'Sunset and the evening star
 And one clear call for me
 And may there be no moaning of the bar
 When I put out to sea.'

Tennyson, apart from talking to Maud at the garden gate, was an East Coast sailor. The above lines were obviously inspired by a safe crossing of the Ore bar. He had read his East Coast Pilot, had left one and a half hours after low water, and had waited for an off shore wind, thus ensuring that the bar would slumber and not moan.

An hour or so later he would have found himself standing off the mouth of the Deben. Out came East Coast Rivers, his burgee was dipped time after time to signal for the Pilot, and, as so often, nothing happened. So, like many a skipper since, he came in on his own, at half flood with four knots of sand swirled tide under him. Having brought up at the Ferry Boat Inn, he sat in the snug and penned the last stanza

'For tho' from out our bourne of time and place
 The flood may bear me far
 I hope to see my Pilot face to face
 When I have crossed the bar.'

Crossing the bar of the Ore or Deben is usually very carefully done, and the first time in a season should be accompanied by an expert. A view, from the shore, of either of them in a winters on shore gale will show you why. But it is strange as to what constitutes an 'expert'.

Our East Coast cruise last year included both these rivers, the first being the Ore. We approached on the last of the ebb from Harwich, beating into a steady N.E. 2 - 3. Both Jon and I were singlehanded, and our boats two small gaff cutters. Locating the Orford Haven buoy was easy, as was finding the single leading mark. There was a launch leading in a large French yacht and behind us some large boats crewed to the eyebrows, which hailed us "Going in?". "Yes." "O.K., we'll follow you." and then among themselves "These guys know where they're going." Hence we were the 'experts'. There is great danger in that philosophy.

A few days later, coming out of the Deben, the role of the 'expert' had changed. Again we aimed to leave at the beginning of the flood, so that if we did touch we would have a chance to float off, and also so that we could see the shoals. The wind this time was E 4 - 5, and on the way down the river we had both reefed.

Engine ready to go - life jacket on - anchor checked. Everything ready. A large boat had come down river with us, and had picked up a mooring just above the ferry. "Going out?" I nodded, "Right - if you don't come back, I'll follow you." "You could have phrased That a bit better" I thought.

Past the ferry is the point of no return, but it is not until you are in the narrows that you can see what conditions are really like. There were dozens of dinghies drawn up on the western beach, and past them the heavy swell and white horses could be seen. This was it.

Suddenly I was surrounded by those dinghies, skipping and dancing out through the surf, as unconcerned as if they had been on Abberton Reservoir. One boat dropped his mainsail to adjust the battens just as he came to the worst part. Two Mirrors came out and actually landed on the biggest sand bar - these were the 'experts', or is ignorance bliss? I relaxed, forgot to keep the leading marks in line, and really ended up in the shallow water. Back on course, out past the Haven buoy, where the incoming boats were lining up. "O.K.?" they queried, dry lipped. "No problem" I replied, "I followed the experts - - -"

C.R.W.

Poetic extracts by Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

1977 SILVER JUBILEE CLYDE RACE.

The Royal Northern Yacht Club had offered to put on an Old Gaffers Race as part of their Jubilee weekend sailing programme, and a two day event had been agreed upon. The course was to be from Kilcreggan Pier to Colintrave on the Saturday, and back again to Kilcreggan on the Sunday. The Rear Commodore (Sailing) of the R.N.Y.C., Tim Henderson, had taken on the organisation of the event, and the result was a truly memorable weekend with some excellent racing.

The weather the week before had been fine, with somewhat light winds, but, as is so often the case, the weekend brought a change in the weather and there was a bit of a nip in the air when I got to the R.N.Y.C. clubhouse at Rhu. A few remaining administrative details were soon cleared up with Tim Henderson, and we enjoyed the rest of the Friday evening in the company of our first Irish crew to enter an O.G. Race - the crew of Oread.

On the Saturday morning, as we collected provisions and installed ourselves on the Committee Boat for the weekend, it was clear that the weather was not going to be quite as nice as we had hoped, but none the less it was quite a good day for racing.

The entry of only seven boats was something of a disappointment, but as we left our mooring and motored down towards the start we could see Tony Vogt and his family aboard Veryan, and we assumed they would be coming down to enter on the line.

Tim had managed to borrow a most suitable boat for the Committee Boat for the weekend - the 44' cutter Marrianna, kindly lent by her owner Henry Weir. With a good spread of sail available, and a 60 H.P. diesel, we anticipated no problems at all in getting to Colintrave well ahead of the racing fleet. We aboard Marianna had no official part to play at the start of the Race, as this was being handled by the R.N.Y.C. Commodore who was also starting the Royal Thames Yacht Club's 24 hour Race - our duties were to be at the Colintrave end of the Race.

Out of the Gareloch we could see some gaffers around, Shireen being the most noticeable. I still had a couple of ratings to work out, and decided to get these done before the start. By some quite extraordinary oversight I misread my watch, and emerged on deck to find the race in progress, with a line of gaffers stretched out ahead of us towards Cloche Point, and two late starters behind us.

The late ones proved to be Hugh Simpson's Clyde 19/24 Shireen, and Tony Vogt's quay punt Veryan. We hoisted main (alas, triangular !) and staysail and set out to overtake the gaffers ahead of us. First one passed was N. Wright's cutter Curlew; then Alan Armstrong's immaculate Tahiti Ketch, Rawanah. Next in the line to be passed was the Irish entrant, Richard Doig's 28' cutter Oread. Built in 1898

by Dickie at Tarbert, she was showing her fine breeding by dashing along at a fine pace. The addition of a dog-house had perhaps slightly marred her fine appearance, but as her charming crew so obviously used her for serious cruising, one had rather to admire the utility of the dog-house than be hypercritical of its appearance.

Ahead of Oread was Tom Duggan's clinker built 24' Shetland boat Hildasay, the youngest in the race at a mere 16 years old. But well clear ahead of the whole fleet was the oldest entrant, Miss Elizabeth Todrick's beautiful 24' cutter Ayrshire Lass, built by Fife at Fairlie back in 1887. With her classic straight stemmed hull painted black and showing a clean bottom as she heeled, and her long bowsprit she was a magnificent sight.

As we sailed down the Clyde to Toward Point most of the fleet behind us took a more or less straight line course, but Ayrshire Lass stood over towards the Dunoon shore, possibly hoping to catch a slightly more favourable wind. There were one or two holes in the wind, and some occasional stronger puffs, but generally it was a very pleasant North Westerly of about force 4. Marianna had managed to overtake and keep ahead of the fleet, but Ayrshire Lass was not all that far behind us as we turned at Toward, and we were glad that the racing boats would have to beat up to Colintrave whilst we could simply lower our sails and motor straight up there.

At least, that was the theory - but no sooner had we lowered the sails and begun to turn into the wind than the diesel, which had run steadily, mainly in neutral, all the way down the Clyde, gave a cough and expired into silence. So it was up sails again, and Tim and I descended below to investigate fuel lines etc., leaving the skipper, Sidney, to sail past the giant oil platforms nearing completion at Ardyne Point. The main problem below appeared to be water in the fuel line, but just as we had got nicely acquainted with the run of the pipes, a shout brought us up on deck to discover that a mid upper shroud had decided to part company from the mast and Sidney had brought us about to head away from the finishing line! However, all proved well. Like many older boats, Marianna proved to be capable of sailing on even with some of the support to the mast gone, and as we returned to our proper course to the finish still just nicely ahead of Ayrshire Lass, the diesel decided that Tim had cleared enough of the water from its system and obliged us by re-starting on about the third try, so we reached Colintrave in comfortable time to get out the cannon and get ourselves sorted out ready to time in the finishers.

We did not have to wait long before Ayrshire Lass came up the Kyle, moving beautifully through the water with no fuss or bother - but deceptively fast. It was nearly a quarter of an hour before the next boat came up - Oread, hotly pursued by Veryan, with Shireen not far behind them. Then after a slightly longer wait came Rawanah, whose immaculate appearance showed the love (and hard work) the Armstrong family lavish on her. Finally, Hildasay crossed the line forty three minutes after Ayrshire Lass, and we learned that Curlew had retired.

So the first day of the two day event appeared to have been a very good race indeed. It was unusual in that of the six finishers, three, Ayrshire Lass, Oread, and Veryan were all racing boat for boat on the same T(H)CF - 0.920. This appeared quite fair for Oread and Veryan, whose hulls are very similar in size and form, but possibly open to question in the case of Ayrshire Lass - four feet shorter than Veryan and Oread. However, the results did indicate that any unfairness in the rating could not be said to have been against Ayrshire Lass!

With the days racing over and the results calculated there was time to enjoy the spectacular scenery and to contemplate an evening of ship visiting, but the clerk of the weather had other ideas. Rain somewhat

dampened enthusiasm for visits to other boats, and a forecast of stronger winds made some owners move further up the Kyle to a more sheltered anchorage. However, despite the slightly unpleasant weather some visiting was achieved, and at least aboard Marianna a very pleasant evening was enjoyed. Oread's crew helped us haul Tim Henderson up the mast to repair the broken shroud and inspect all the other mast fittings, then after supper the crew of Ayrshire Lass came over for a yarn.

I had visited Rawanah earlier in the evening, and was amazed to find that over forty years of life appeared to have had no effect at all on her sound construction - joints in her structural timbers are still as snug a fit as they were when she left King's at Pin Mill back in 1935. In fact, the only visible sign that she had not been bought new at the last Boat Show was some bruising from the chain on the heavy mooring post on the foredeck !

Whilst the overall race was a two day event and places would depend on the total time to cover both legs of the course, each days results were to be worked separately and prizes awarded for each leg. For the first day, Ayrshire Lass's commanding lead gave her both the line prize and the first on corrected time.

Results for the Saturday - Start 12.15

Final No. Posn.	Name	Corr. Time h m s	Posn. over Line	Finish Time h m s
1 209	Ayrshire Lass	3 27 46	1	16 00 50
2 19	Shireen	3 32 43	4	16 18 24
3 790	Oread	3 39 48	2	16 13 55
4 560	Veryan	3 41 05	3	16 15 19
5 358	Hildasay	3 57 24	6	16 43 51
6 141	Rawanah	4 04 01	5	16 24 01

Retired - Curlew Non starter - Mist

The wind in the night was not as bad as had been forecast, and by breakfast time on the Sunday the rain had stopped. We had one minor panic when we realised that we had left the only O.G.A. flag we had with the Commodore up at Kilcreggan, but Tim found a white flag and a roll of broad black sticky tape, and a few minutes careful work produced a very special Silver Jubilee O.G.A. flag, complete with XXV in the fly, which was promptly authorised for use by the officials of both the R.N.Y.C. and the O.G.A..

As ten o'clock drew near both Oread and Ayrshire Lass who had remained at the Colintrave anchorage for the night were seen to be having difficulty in recovering their anchors, which appeared to be well and truly dug in. Both boats were fairly close in to the shore - which was just a lee shore, and at one stage it looked very much as if both of them were going to go aground within minutes of the start. However, both made it clear, although not soon enough to make a prompt start.

A good brisk N.W. wind gave a fast running start, and the boats which had moved on up the Kyle the night before were obviously not keen on risking coming too far down too early, with the result that it was a somewhat ragged start. Only Rawanah had (in their usual manner) closely estimated the distance to run to the line, and before the two flags were down on deck Rawanah was tearing past, clearly travelling at her maximum speed and thoroughly enjoying the favourable wind.

Oread followed her over some two minutes later, then came Shireen and Veryan. Having come straight down wind from her anchorage, Veryan had not heard the guns or seen the starting flags, so sailed close past to confirm that the race had indeed re-started. This left her having to gybe over to clear the shore, and it was a real pleasure to watch the execution of that gybe - although with my memories of two gybes aboard Veryan last year, I have little doubt that we aboard Marianna enjoyed the gybe somewhat more than Tony did whilst he was making it! Ayrshire Lass had got herself organised and clear of the shore to cross the line three minutes after the gun, then a further minute later Hildasay crossed, prudently reefed down a bit.

Unfortunately, we had to collect our line marking buoy, and that was all we saw of the race. However, on our return to Rhu, we heard the reports of a thrilling high speed duel between Rawanah and Ayrshire Lass round Toward Point. When we got to Kilcreggan and collected the list of finishing times from the Commodore's Committee Boat anchored there, we could see what a race it must have been. Rawnah had covered the nineteen miles in under two and a half hours to finish first, beating Ayrshire Lass by five minutes. Shireen had done very well to finish third, and Veryan had beaten Oread. The last boat in, Hildasay, had finished in under three hours. Subsequent calculations showed that Rawanah had achieved a start to finish average speed of 7.89 knots, and the slowest boat, Hildasay, had averaged 6.47 knots - and that without making any allowance for her late start!

Results for the Sunday - Start 10.00

1	19	Shireen	2	17	26	3	12	37	15
2	209	Ayrshire Lass	2	17	33	2	12	29	31
3	141	Rawanah	2	21	37	1	12	24	30
4	560	Veryan	2	25	26	4	12	38	05
5	790	Oread	2	30	18	5	12	43	22
6	358	Hildasay	2	34	40	6	12	56	10

Overall result of the two days racing

					Total elapsed time
1	209	Ayrshire Lass	5	45	19 (1) 6 15 21
2	19	Shireen	5	50	10 (4) 6 40 39
3	560	Veryan	6	06	32 (3) 6 38 24
4	790	Oread	6	10	05 (5) 6 42 27
5	141	Rawanah	6	25	39 (2) 6 33 31
6	358	Hildasay	6	32	46 (6) 7 25 01

Whilst our racing had been in progress, other yachts were out in the Clyde competing in the Royal Thames Yacht Club's 24 hour race. Tim Henderson was most interested to see how the performances of the Gaffers compared with those of the more modern boats in the 24 hour race, so by taking the overall average speeds of the gaffers and calculating the distances they could have covered in the full 24 hours, and then applying the appropriate handicap factors some comparative results were calculated. Hildasay, the slowest of the gaffers, would have ended up a few miles short of the total amassed by the winner of the R.T.Y.C. event, but Ayrshire Lass would have been credited with some 20 miles more! Since almost a quarter of the total distance sailed by the gaffers was a beat to windward, whilst competitors in the 24 hour race would have chosen courses to avoid beating, these theoretical figures may well be on the

pessimistic side !

The weekend finished with a buffet supper and prizegiving at the Royal Northern Clubhouse, with Mrs. J.T.Dunlop, the wife of the Commodore presenting the prizes. Elizabeth Todrick received well deserved applause as she collected successive tankards for being winner overall, for line honours on the Saturday, and for first place on the Saturday. During the supper, it was a pleasant surprise to be greeted by O.G.A. member Chris Thornhill, who was present as the official representative of the Royal Thames Yacht Club for their 24 hour race. The only thought to mar a most pleasant weekend was that illness had prevented our President, Michael Millar, from being present.

The thanks of all concerned in the O.G.A. go to the Officers and Committee of the Royal Northern Yacht Club for the splendid welcome they all gave to our 'band of piratical individualists' and for the superb organisational work which lay behind such a smooth running, well oiled weekend. Rear Commodore Tim Henderson had done a magnificent job. Personally, I was disappointed that we did not have more boats in the event - but since the indications are that this event which started as a 'Jubilee special' may well become an annual fixture, let us hope that future years will see larger entries. Alas, future years will not feature the delightful silver covered special programme !

After the event, I received the following letter from the R.N.Y.C..

"Thank you for your letter of 7th June which was well received by our Committee.

You will probably be interested to hear that when we were sending a copy of our Sailing Instructions to our Patron, Her Majesty The Queen and His Royal Highness Prince Philip we referred to the Old Gaffers in the following terms:

"Our Rear Commodore, who started the Colintrave section of the Race said, that the sight of the old ladies romping through the line on a broad reach with a fresh breeze helping them along, was something he would treasure for many a day."

We received an answer from Her Majesty's secretary who said of the Sailing Instructions "I gave these to Her Majesty and His Royal Highness who were delighted to hear the Regatta was such a successful occasion and were much amused by your account of the races for the Old Gaffers Association".

Yours sincerely, R.G.K.Harvey, Hon. Sec " (R.N.Y.C.)

I also had a letter from Hugh Simpson, of Shireen -

"Firstly let me say how enormously my crew and I and Shireen taken in reverse order enjoyed the two days to Colintrave and back.

Secondly I should also like to apologise most sincerely for not being present at the prizegiving. Two of my young partners (my son and Andrew Cubie) were my crew and we were all in for a very heavy day here this morning. Frankly, we thought that there was little likelihood of our appearing among the more honorable boats and we thought the advantage of getting over here to our respective homes and having a long night in which to sleep off the rigours of the day would be well within the philosophy of work hard play hard !! However, I am sure that you had a very good evening and I would like to take this opportunity of thanking you for the splendid arrangements.

It was nice that Shireen kept up her record of being second. Consistency is one of the greatest of all virtues.

Yours sincerely F.H.S.

SOUTH WEST JUBILEE WEEKEND

For the first time in our 14 years as an Association, bad weather has given us a non-event. Jon Ward-Hayne writes:-

"I regret to have to tell you that the Jubilee Passage Race from Salcombe to Newton Ferrers was a non event.

After three weeks of dry N.E. weather, the wind started to play silly buggers on the day before the race. All but two of the entrants turned up, including Vigilance and Margeurite T from Cowes and Reynardine from Falmouth.

On the morning of the race (the Sunday) the wind was firmly in the West blowing 6 with 7 - 8 forecast, and, hoping it would go away as quickly as it had arrived, we postponed for 24 hours since apart from Provident and Margeurite T no one fancied a dead beat into that sort of weather.

In fact Monday morning was worse, and although I said I'd start Class I if anyone wished to go, they all stayed firmly attached to their moorings and it turned into a Jubilee Rally and booze up.

After some discussions we decided to re-run the race on Sunday 18th September (a week after the Solent Race) as most people reckoned they could make that weekend. Because westerlies are very likely then, we will race from Newton Ferrers to Salcombe.

The Island Cruising Club have offered to lay on a party after the prize giving on Egremont, their h.q. ship.

Various people donated excellent prizes including a fine painting by Les Spence (owner of Certa), an engraved blob of glass from Salcombe Chandlers Ltd., a huge bolt (The Bolt Head Bolt) from the Island Cruising Club, The Blackstone Block, various Jubilee pint pots, and R.N.L.I. pennants. So far, £28 has been raised for the lifeboat.

Local interest in Salcombe has been very high and the enthusiasm of all those who turned up leads me to suspect that this will become a regular event, supplementing the Dartmouth race.

If another Newsletter is due out in the interval, please mention the new date, as we can cope with a couple of extra entries (£1.00 a boat) from any new owners who may not have heard about it. Present entries need NOT re-apply.

New sailing instructions will be issued in due course. Entrants are advised to contact Salcombe Harbour Office if they require a mooring after the race. Moorings are not cheap at Salcombe, but most people were very glad to be on one at the weekend, as holding ground is not of the best, and wind against tide makes the fairway very uncomfortable.

I'd like to put on record the co-operation of the harbour master and staff during the weekend, putting boats on sheltered moorings, etc..

J. W-H.

Any other members wishing to enter for this postponed event should contact Jonathan Ward-Hayne at Donhead, St. Dunstan's Rd., Salcombe, Devon.

FAREWELL TRIP

When you sell your boat, you do not often have the chance of making a farewell trip in her. I was lucky, the new owner asked me to help sail her back to her home waters in the Blackwater where she was built.

So there we were, early on Good Friday morning, tucking in two reefs and stoking up the stove against a cold gusting Northerly wind with hail and snow forecast.

It was an historic moment - the Glad Times was heading out to sea with no beer aboard! During the last minute rush, logistics went awry and the beer was forgotten, but we had plenty of food.

We had to sail ten miles down the Crouch against the flood tide, then up the coast through the shallow Raysan Channel. As the first hail storm hit us we ruefully remembered how we had delayed this trip for a month, for the weather to improve.

Leaving the shelter of the river we plugged into short nasty seas for a long slow mile out to the Outer Crouch before turning up into the Raysan. We were nearly an hour behind schedule but that gave us more water so that we did not ground in the troughs.

Now we were heading straight into the wind with no room to tack so we revved up the engine and stowed the sails. The skipper, with a typical Old Gaffers tactic, glanced to windward and insisted on making the tea and tending the fire in the warm cabin.

Within two minutes hailstones were bouncing off my eyeballs and I was spitting them out like loose teeth. To watch the compass course I had to hold a windscreen in front of me. Later, as the skies cleared, the skipper appeared with the tea, quietly grumbling about how long the kettle took to boil - a masterly performance.

By now, our young crew member was looking rather pale, so we decided to make for Bradwell rather than plug on up to Brightlingsea. In the 'Green Man' we made up for lost drinking time.

After a leisurely breakfast we followed the tide up the Blackwater through flurries of sleet and hail. As we tied up at Maldon on the top of the tide, the snow came and we nursed the dying embers of a fire that had not been out for two days, while a blizzard swirled outside.

It was a truly memorable farewell trip.

L.J.W.

BOOK REVIEW

The SAILING PILOTS of the BRISTOL CHANNEL By Peter J. Stuckey
Published by David and Charles at £4.95 158pp Illus.

This book is a "must" for all those who are interested in the origins of the craft we love. The Bristol Channel Pilot Cutters are regarded by many as being the finest working craft for conversion to pleasure boats, and many fine cruising yachts have been designed on lines 'based on those of a pilot cutter. After reading this book, there can be little question as to why these craft were so favoured as yachts.

The book is very much more than a technical account of the boats themselves, and indeed, only one of the ten chapters is devoted to the craft themselves, and another to how they were built. The remainder is a wonderfully full account of the Bristol Channel Pilot service in the days of sail, from the earliest recorded origins of the service to the amalgamation of the service and the adoption of steam cutters.

Of two of the most fascinating chapters, 'Life in a Bristol Channel Pilot Skiff', and 'A Newport Pilot Remembers' it is more correct to say they are edited by Peter Stuckey than written by, as they are first hand accounts of a way of life which has now vanished. As Peter writes - "Here, then, are some of Capt Buck's recollections of life in the Bristol pilot skiffs in the early part of the century, unaltered save for the occasional introduction of punctuation marks for easier reading." And wonderful, gripping reading they make.

We must be grateful to Peter for the work he has done in collecting these vivid accounts. Most of these first hand accounts are masterpieces of quiet understatement, such as the incident when the cutter Greta was sunk by a steamer, leaving the three men hanging on the steamer's anchors. " - - Pilot Chiswell said he would never forget hanging on to that anchor by his arms; he was over sixty years of age and weighed 15 stone !"

The portions of the book which deal with the boats themselves contain two sets of lines (Margeurite and Herga), a lovely cutaway drawing showing typical accommodation, and a self explanatory diagram of the running rigging. Copies of specifications and extracts from a sailmakers daybook help to complete a full picture of the boats.

The two-masted Neath and Swansea pilot boats have a chapter to themselves, which includes some excellent drawings.

Another most interesting chapter is headed simply 'Pilots' Pleasures, and recalls the days when local regattas were just that, and a whole community enjoyed themselves.

The text is complemented by a fine assortment of photographs of boats at work, boats racing, boats ashore; accommodation; and of the pilots themselves.

This book is both a first class reference book with many valuable facts and figures, and it is also first class reading.

Most of our members who like to read about older boats - and about other comparable forms of craftsmanship - are probably familiar with the firm of David and Charles. For any who are not, they are to be found at Brunel House, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 2DW. For those who enjoy books like Peter Stuckey's, David & Charles still have in print 'Sailing Drifters' and 'Sailing Trawlers', both by the late Edgar J. March.

A NEW AMERICAN OLD GAFFER

MAGGIE MAY may be the first bawley to be built for some time. Certainly she's probably the only one ever to have been built in the U.S.. Her hull is a scaled down version of Maud, a 37ft 14.2 ton bawley built by J.H.Cann, and I believe her model reposes in the Science Museum. Her lines have been published in Peter Norton's "The end of the Voyage" (Percival Marshall & Co., 1959) and elsewhere.

Maggie May displaces 16,000 lbs, is 31' LOA, 10'1" beam, and 3' draft. Her name came from a chanty about a Liverpool girl who was a nice young lady, but had a bad habit of taking money from sailors over and above fees for services performed. For this she was sent off to Van Diemen's Land (tasmania) at Government expense. We thought the name of such a well travelled young lady would serve well for our cutter.

As to why I decided on the bawley, it is the only shoal draft cutter I could think of. Years of reading Maurice Griffiths and Peter Pye had turned me into an absolute cutter freak, but try to find a cutter that will fit in the shallow waters of Biscayne Bay or the Bahamas !

I finally decided a bawley with a smack rig would fit the bill so six years ago Maggie May's keel was laid. She's not of traditional build, rather she's strip planked with 1 1/16" square fir strips, through nailed and glued, then glassed rather heavily outside, lightly inside. I've built other boats this way, and several other local builders have also had quite good luck with the method. Her bulkheads provide some stiffening, and there are several extra frames in addition. She seems remarkably solid, and of course leaks not a drop.

She's got five berths, two in the main cabin, one quarter berth, and two in the focsle. A hanging closet separates the focsle from the main cabin, and the galley is aft, opposite the quarter berth. Maggie is powered by a 10 H.P. Saab with variable pitch propellor. The engine is a wonderful heavy beast which runs beautifully. We view the variable pitch with some suspicion (see below) and would recommend a standard transmission. I'd prefer no engine at all, but that's impossible at our crowded sailing club mooring.

Her rig is gaff cutter with a boom and 9' outboard reefing bowsprit. With topsail she carries about 600 square feet, and we are debating about rigging a flying jib to add another 100 square feet. She's got a 1,000 lb lead shoe along her keel and another 8,000 lb inside, but most of the inside ballast is in steel bars as lead was too dear for us.

Headroom is about 5'6" in the main cabin, and her decks are carried up to within 3" of the cap rail to give added room above the bunks. A rubrail is bolted along the level of the original deck and this gives her the appearance of having rather high bulwarks and low topsides. The original bawley / fishing smack appearance is thus (we hope) retained. We also kept the cabin low as to my mind a boat must look good above all. Getting Maggie down to her lines just about broke us, and though I've designed a few boats I neglected to figure the space her inside ballast would take, consequently we had to raise the floorboards during the ballasting.

We are still finishing the old girl and will undoubtedly be doing so for some time, but have been able to do a bit of sailing aboard her since her launching in March. Thank God for Michael Frost and his fine book "Boadicea CK 213" for he gave us some ideas about her handling we otherwise wouldn't have come up with. We also got some consolation from reading of his similar experience when Maggie went into irons and refused to fall off the first time we tried to bring her about (with only her mainsail set). She was badly out of trim at the time, and we've had no trouble with her since. We have all been delighted with her performance thus far, though she has taken some getting used to. She'll sail herself for 30 minutes at a time with no trouble, and longer if the wind stays steady. We've outsailed some large yachts while reaching down the bay, and she's quite dry in a chop. She's certainly no dinghy, and all her manoeuvring occurs with dignity!

Our worst moments occurred as we were trying to get under way from the mooring one morning. In rapid succession my wife accidentally let the mooring float run through the chock, splitting it into two halves which blew off to leeward, I stalled the engine as we tried to pick up the sinking mooring pennant; while we rapidly blew down on another boat I rushed below to crank the engine (electric starter not hooked up yet), then rushed on deck in time to throw her into forward gear and push against the other boat before we hit her. As we gathered way and pulled away from the other craft our little terrier jumped aboard her, thinking, no doubt, we wouldn't have come so close unless we intended to visit. While our dog barked excitedly I struggled to shift into reverse pitch. Something was wrong, and when we finally got into reverse we stuck there and began backing across the harbor.

By now the stranded dog was howling mournfully and my excited wife was giving me more advice than I needed. In my usual polite manner I shouted "Shut up and let me think!", and settled back for a moment of quiet contemplation. The gears of my mental equipment slowly ground into action as I struggled to hold down the rising panic. Finally I shut down the engine, raised the staysail, which fortunately was hanked on, and sailed back to the site of our mooring. There we rounded up and anchored. The club launch was near, and we hailed her to pick up our

now terrified little terrier. The launch operator still doesn't understand how she got aboard an adjacent boat without getting wet, nor why we didn't simply motor over and pick her up ourselves.

On later inspection I discovered part of the pitch control linkage had slipped due to a weakness in the design.

Hopefully this will be our worst adventure aboard Maggie May.

When we get her topmast aboard I'll send a photo. Even without it the launch operator says she's the prettiest boat on the moorings.

P.S. Would be delighted to correspond with bawley or smack owners in the U.K..
Lowell P. Thomas, 6626 S.W. 63. Terr. Miami, Fla. 33143, USA.

As I hoped it might, Len Warren's challenge to members to come up with some Limericks has produced some results. I think there is sufficient material between the poetry in our opening article and these efforts to ensure that unfair comparisons will not be made !

Dedicated to Les Bowen (with kind regards);-

There is an old gaffer from Hayling
Who's boat leaked somewhat on port
When challenged to stbd
The instant retort
Was 'Sorry but you can see that I'm bailing.

Dedicated to the author;-

There is an old gaffer on Hayling
Who's boat has for a long time been ailing
Will it ever be finished ?
- - - - -
- - - - -

A.D.S.

There was an Old Gaffer from Looe
Who didn't know what to do
His bowsprit was bent
His sails were all rent
And he couldn't pump out his heads.

There was an Old Gaffer named Wilful
Whose skipper was not very skillful
While entering the Sound
He ran her aground
And her bilges started to fill full.

An Old Gaffer called Fred was sailing
In a breeze, when his eams started ailing
He grabbed for a bucket
And shouted "Oh Bother"
And immediately started bailing

An Old Gaffer, while painting his topmast
Was heard to exclaim "Oh Blast,
Two years painting was fun,
Now the fitting out's done
I must scame myself sailing at last.

J. W-H.

A randy Old Gaffer named Blight
 Lost his topsail one night off the Wight
 To make good the deficiency
 He obtained that sufficiency
 A C -cup supplied by his wife. M.E.W.

There was an Old Gaffer from Elm
 Whose crew took it in turns at the helm
 The course he did run
 Was fixed by the sun
 And woe betide if they went not as he tell 'em.

There was an Old Gaffer from London
 Whose boat gybed along with abandon
 Each time the sheet crossed
 A boat hook was lost
 He just shot them away quite at random!

There was an Old Gaffer from Brancaster
 Who never expected disaster
 But put up full sail
 In a force eight gale
 To make the boat go a bit faster J.L.

Can we make limericks a regular feature of our Newsletters ?
 We have a lot of members who have NOT sent in their efforts so far !

ADVERTISEMENTS

For Sale - Morecambe Bay prawner Charlotte, 27'3" L.O.A.,
 built Crossfield at Arnside in 1893, elm & pine planking on oak.
 Fully equipped, fitted with Stuart 10 H.P.. Around £3,000
 G. Batten, 14, Belmont Rd., Ilfracombe, Devon

For sale - Three terylene sails, main, foresail & jib. Total area
 560 square feet. Ex cutter Tee Jay, 28' L.O.A. £80.00
 Details from K. Plumridge, 15, Conway Rd., Hanworth, Middlesex

For sale - Enterprise 32' x 10' x 3'6". Southend fishing smack, built
 1905 by Reeds of Burnham on Crouch. Grown frames doubled with 1½"
 carvel planking. 6' headroom in main cabin, 4 berths. Mast in
 taberhacle. 2.210 BMC diesel, 3-1 hydraulic recudtion box (2 years old)
 Major refit and rebuild 1971 to 1974. Extra outside ballast to
 counteract large topsail. All sails canvas. £3,500
 Mr. Partridge, Manor Lane, Borstal, Rochester, Kent

For the last 18 months John Gill has been unable to give the time
 needed for the proper care and sailing of Ploughboy, so with much
 regret he feels that he should find a new owner for her.

The new owner must want to cherish and sail a very fine example
 of a 29' gaff rigged Morecambe Bay prawner, built 1902 by Crossfield
 of Arnside. Her history is mostly known and ten years ago she was
 carefully rebuilt. She has a complete set of new sails and an almost
 unused Brit engine awaiting installation. She needs a little routine
 maintenance but in all other respects she is ready for sea. Any o fers
 to John Gill, Rossall School, Fleetwood, Lancashire

WANTED Old Gaffer under 20' offered shipshape home with young family.
 Please phone Alton 85987, or write to P.J.Henderson, 183, Wooteys Way,
 Alton, Hants, stating price, type, and condition of craft.

For Sale Gaff sloop Gigha. A. Mylne, Scottish Islands Class, Bute 1924. Sloop, 25'6" x 22'6" x 7'6" x 3'6". Mahognay on oak, raised topsides. 5 sails, inboard, 2 berths, 2 pipecotts. New mast, decks, toilet. Water, gas, & electrics. Favourable surveys 1971, 1976. Ashore Amble. £3450. Tel Newcastle on Tyne 861617
J. Bird, 19 Greenfield Avenue, Newcastle on Tyne.

For sale - Gaff mainsail made by Ratsey & Lapthorn in 1937 and never used. Ratsey number 10558; Luff 19'3", Head 13'30½", leach 27', foot 16'1". Brass eyes for lacing to spars and for hoops. Asking price £150. D.P.Webb, Mansfield House, Ringwood, Hants.

For sale - Dunlin, 28' gaff cutter built Camper and Nicholson 1890 on the lines of a Falmouth Quay Punt. Pitch pine on oak. Kelvin Ricardo 4 cyl. petrol/paraffin engine. External lead ballast, internal iron ballast. Oil navigation and anchor lights, blocks, shackles, anchor & chain and many miscellaneous appertenances. Very old suit of sails, no spars. Two years work on renovation has left job incomplete and no time available now to finish the task. Offers - Herne Bay 64816
R.G.Ward, 37, Greenhill Gardens, Herne Bay, Kent

SECRETARY'S NOTES. We now have a proper Area Secretary for the Clyde Area. Alan Armstrong, of 52, Bruce Rd., Bishopton, Renfrewshire has offered to fill this post. As it was through Alan's initiative that we enjoyed the R.N.Y.C. Silver Jubilee Race, I think we can look forward to some real growth in the Clyde Area now. Various members in the area have intimated that they would be willing to help out when we were able to find a 'leader' in the area, so I hope that those who have made such offers will contact Alan so we can set up a full Area Committee.

I must offer apologies to members who have written to me recently, and who may be awaiting replies. An overload at work has occupied my evenings and weekends recently - and is also the cause of the undue haste in cutting the stencils for this Newsletter.

NOTES FROM THE UPPER CROUCH

The bad weather during the springtime delayed our Old Gaffers from their usual early start to the season; but by now all those that are going afloat are afloat.

The work lists are longer than usual as tools, wood, black varnish and paint are carried aboard for the jobs that should have been done during 'lay-up'.

It is amazing how vital, urgent jobs become so much less important once you are afloat; but at least they are at the top of the list for next winter.

Already the count-down for the East Coast Race has begun, with skippers muttering about 'crew training programmes'. Your boatless correspondent has been willingly press-ganged into crewing on the Southend beach boat Coronation. Having been presented with a chef's hat, it looks as if he has also volunteered as cook!

With half a dozen concrete boats being finished off, it was a red letter day when a mobile crane came to step the mast in the Colin Archer hull. It settled sweetly into the step, only to be hastily hoisted for a Jubilee crown to be put under the heel. Then bowsprit, gaff, and boom were shipped and imagination set the tanned sails. She will be a proud sight on the river, and a very good example of modern building techniques blending with traditional gear and handicraft.

An O.G.A. membership form will be nailed to the mast, and the skipper will be so relieved that it is not a writ that he will hasten to join, and take part in the Rally at Stone.

L.J.W.

SOLENT AREA RACE Saturday, 10th September 1977 09.30 Hrs.

Venue, Osborne Bay - Course - around buoys in the Solent - details will be given in the sailing instructions.

Entry Fee £4 until 1st September, thereafter £6

CLASSES As general information, except that Class I will be sub divided if there are sufficient entries to give prizes to boats over 40ft LWL., and Class II will be sub divided into IIa for boats over 50 years old and II b for those under 50.

SUPPER after the race will be served in the National Sailing Centre TO TICKET HOLDERS ONLY. Tickets (at £1.75) can be booked on the Race Entry Form or direct from C.M.Waddington (as below). There will be two sittings, one at 18.45 and one at 19.30. Self service arrangements to keep cost down.

PRIZES PRIZEGIVING at 7.00 p.m.

- The Dead-Eye Trophy for the first boat to complete the course, irrespective of age, size, or other winnings.
- The Channel Cup for the first boat on corrected time, irrespective of size, being fifty years old or older.
- The Gaffer's Eye for the first Class I boat on corrected time, over 40ft LWL not being the winner of the Channel Cup or the Le Havre Plate.
- The Le Havre Plate for the first Class I boat on corrected time, not being the winner of the Channel Cup
- The Emsworth Cleat for the first Class IIa boat on corrected time, not being the winner of the Channel Cup
- The Channel Plate for the first Class IIb boat on corrected time
- The Quiver Trophy for the first Class III boat on corrected time, not being the winner of the Channel Cup
- The Edgar J. March Memorial Trophy for the first working or ex working boat to complete the course, irrespective of age, size, or other winnings.
- The C.H.Paxton Memorial Trophy for the boat which, in the opinion of the Committee has put up the best non winning performance in this and previous Old Gaffers Races
- The Pitchfork for the boat which starts in the race having made the longest passage from her home port in order to take part (measured by the shortest navigable course).
- The Anchor Trophy for the last boat to cross the starting line, not having used her anchor after the five minute gun, and complete the course within the time limit.
- The Laggards Ladle for the last boat to complete the course within the time limit.

Second, third and fourth prizes will be awarded in all classes in which there are 4, 8, and 12 starters respectively.

Silver Jubilee Momentos for all boats taking part.

Bed and Breakfast at the Sailing Centre for Saturday night only for anyone who wants it at £2.85 plus V.A.T.. Bookings to the Sailing Centre.

Moorings will be arranged opposite the Sailing Centre.

Entries to C.M.Waddington, Wicormarine Ltd., Cranleigh Rd., Portchester, Fareham, Hants.

FOR SALE Madeleine 84 Gaff Cutter, 30ft., built Brightlingsea 1896 of pitch pine on oak. Overall condition excellent, having been re-fitted, re-fastened and re-rigged in 1970. Stuart 8HP with full electrics and alternator. Twin 6 gallon fuel tanks. Tan canvas mainsail foresail, and storm jib, with terylene jib on Wykeham-Martin. S.L. lavatory; Taylor twin burner paraffin stove; compass. Comprehensive inventory; four berths. For sale after five years of pleasurable ownership and two voyages across the North Sea. £3,500 D.J.Smith, Mistley House, Mistley, Essex. Tel Manningtree 2178.

Our President, Michael Millar, has asked me to pass on his apologies to all members for not having been able to attend the O.G.A. functions he had hoped to so far this year. Illness and pressure of work have curtailed his activities. I know that all members will join me in wishing Michael a speedy return to normal conditions.

Now, our usual warm welcome to the following new members;-

J.D.A.Burn, 8, Belmont Terrace, Totnes, Devon	Elizabeth Mary	107
D.P.Cox, 40, George Rd., Edgbaston, Birmingham	Velsia	445
R.E.Doig, 56, Wyncairn Rd., Larne, Co. Antrim	Oread	790
A.N.Godden, Yew Bank House, Ibworth, Nr. Basingstoke, Hants.	Otter	787
R.M.Johnson, Parton Vane, Basset Place, Falmouth, Cornwall	Reynardine	758
R.S.Johnson, Springfield Cottage, Corse Lawn, Gloucester	Camellia	792
I.F.Kiloh, c/o Harbourmaster, Brightlingsea, Colchester, Essex	Cachalot	222
M.P.Minter, 18, Dunsford Gardens, Exeter EX4 1LN Devon	Blue Jay	793
S.C.Mooney, 22, Rockstone Lane, Southampton Hants.	Adelle	789
R.H.Platt, L'Ancrese, Winsor Rd., Winsor, Southampton SO4 2HF	Lisa	392
B. Richardson, Reeves Hall, East Mersea, Colchester, Essex	Madeline	794
R. Sellwood, Greenbanks, Agar Rd., Truro, Cornwall	Carn Dhu	226
Miss E.M.Todrick, Greenlea Cottage, Rahane by Helensburgh Dunbartonshire	Ayrshire Lass	209
J.D.O.Valentine, Lukes Minnie Swanwick Marina, Southampton	Lukes Minnie	860

Would all members please note that copy for the next issue of the Newsletter should be in my hands BEFORE September 14th.

All being well, the issue will be printed and distributed in the last week of September and the first week of October.

E.C.A. members please note that printing will be held for IMMEDIATE reports of the Seamanship Trial at the end of September.
J.A.S.