



1976/2

Old Gaffers Association Newsletter



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Braeside, 2, Greenbank St., Galashiels,
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OLD GAFFERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER 1976/2

DIARY DATES

Saturday, July 17th East Coast Race. Start 0800 at Stone. There may just be time to contact the Area Secretary, Rob Williamson, at Brick Kiln Cottage, Coggeshall Rd., Great Tey, Colchester, Essex.

Sunday, August 15th. North East Race at Amble. Start 0930. Details from Area Secretary, Graham Carr, 14, Henderson St., Amble.

Saturday, September 4th. Solent Race. Start 1000 at Cowes. Entry fee £2.500 to Aug. 25th, £4 thereafter. Details from, and entries to Chris Waddington, Wicormarine, Cranleigh Rd., Portchester, Fareham, Hants.

Saturday, October 9th. Rally at Cowes Corinthian Yacht Club.

Saturday, September 25th Clyde Race - See Page 16.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

This will be the final reminder that at the last A.G.M., the annual subscription was increased to £3. All people listed as members should have had a reminder with their last Newsletter to advise them of how much they owed for this year. Efforts will be made to enclose further reminders with this issue to those of you who have not paid - but this may not be possible, so if you are in doubt as to whether you have paid, please check. FAILURE TO PAY THE INCREASED SUBSCRIPTION WILL RESULT IN TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP.

Would all Area Secretaries please note that with the increase in subscription, the surcharge for non members wishing to enter any of the O.G.A. Races is automatically increased to £3.

BOAT REGISTER Several members have advised us of boats they now own when sending in their forms for the increased subscription, and so a considerable number of new registrations have been made. If YOU own a gaffer, and do not know her O.G.A. registered number, please look for the list of new numbers later in this issue, and if she is not included in this list, please advise me, giving her main dimensions, designer, builder, place built, etc.

J.A.Scarlett.

COVER PICTURE The cover picture this issue shows the 50' yawl DUET racing in an East Coast Old Gaffers Race. Duet, originally named Gaviota, was designed by Linton Hope and built by White Bros. of Southampton in 1912. After being renamed Duet she was bought by Augustine Courtauld, who kept her based at West Mersea and Tollesbury for many years, during which she cruised to the Baltic and to the Mediterranean. Later she was owned by the Rev. Christopher Courtauld, who since 1961 has had her on loan to the Ocean Youth Club. For a number of years the O.Y.C. based her at Brightlingsea, from whence in 1967, 1968, and 1969 she sallied forth to compete in the East Coast Old Gaffers Races. Her performance in this event was consistent. Each year, she led the whole fleet home, but the handicapping placed her 22nd in '67; 12th in '68 and 15th in '69. Many of those who raced against her there will remember with awe the enormous headsail she sometimes set.

In 1973 and 1974, still with the O.Y.C., she tried her luck in the Solent Old Gaffers Race. Here she was again consistent, but did not do quite so well, finishing fifth over the line each time, to be placed 23rd in '73 and 43rd in '74.

In 1975, Duet was one of the entrants in the Old Gaffers Fastnet, in which she won the British Seagull Award for the first around the Rock; the Bordon Trophy for the first boat home, and the Blake Pot for the first boat built pre 1925 to finish.

There can be little doubt that Duet is one of the finest of the larger old yachts still sailing. Perhaps some issue we may be able to publish a picture which gives a better impression of her very fine hull.

URGENTLY WANTED Good clear black and white pictures for use as cover pictures for future issues. This picture of Duet is the last of my pictures which is suitable for use as a Newsletter cover; and I have one more cover in stock.

If you have a clear picture, with good contrasts, of your boat, please lend it to us for a cover picture, and let us have as many details as you possibly can about the boat, her construction, history, etc. Many members have commented favourably on the pictorial covers for the Newsletters - please help us to keep them coming. J.A.S.

NEWS FROM THE SOLENT AREA All the casualties from the gale which followed last years Solent Race now seem to be well on the way to recovery. Gaivota, Muriel, and Citara (ex Rover) are sailing again; Storm is back at Rye and David Cade is working on her there, and Kirsty should be launched early in July. Frances Flutter is reported as making progress towards recovery although she has suffered some setbacks and is still in plaster.

July 10th (which will almost certainly occur between the preparation and the posting of this Newsletter !) is the date for the rally at the Folly Inn. Some fourteen boats are expected, and a cheese and wine 'get-together' aboard Citara is planned.

The French section in St. Malo are planning a race in early August, via Guernsey, Cowes, Shambles East, Alderney and Jersey. Any members who are interested in this event (either to participate or to sail with the French boats in local waters) can get more details from Monsieur Paris, 2, Rue de l'Industrie, St. Malo 35400.

The Solent Area Committee are urging owners to enter early for the race on September 4th. Whilst late entries provide a higher income for Area funds, they do make life VERY difficult for the race organisers. At this point, it might be appropriate to put in the comment applicable to all races that our races are not organised by some magical 'THEM' with quite unlimited time and resources - they are organised and run by O.G.A. members, many of whom have demanding occupations which leave them little spare time in which to work on and sail their own boats. On Race days, the organisers would love to be out with the fleet, but they are conscientious people who recognise that unless some people make some sacrifices there will not be a race - so please help to make their task as easy as possible by entering early and filling in the entry form clearly. I am sure that all Area Secretaries would welcome offers of help from owners in other areas who are unable to enter their boats for a race, but could drive over for the day to help.

For the benefit of those who like to plan ahead, the Solent Area Committee have announced that the 1977 Solent Area Race will be held on Saturday, September 10th.

NEWS FROM THE EAST COAST AREA

RALLY AT WALTON BACKWATERS, 19th to 20th June 1976

"We'll make the date as close to Mid-summer as we can", we said in January, "bound to get good weather then." And so we watched the weather maps for a week before hand, and although a 'front' was slowly edging down the country, it wouldn't reach us till after the rally - so we thought !

On the Friday night, Jon Mottershaw in Tidebird, and I in Tarka set off from West Mersea, with an ebb tide and a force 4 S.W. Between the Bench Head and the Knoll we met the usual uncomfortable short sea, so to reduce the motion and spray, we each reefed. There were few boats out that evening, and the clouds had a hard edge that showed plenty of wind higher up - perhaps that front could get to us after all ! Clacton pier - looking deserted and dark, and then Walton, and the familiar Naze - the Medusa blinking away, and all the others beginning to show in the late evening twilight. Navigation lights on, and heading for the lights of Dovercourt - if we can find the Pye End - we can get into the Backwaters !

At 12 30 hours we gave up looking - too much dazzle from Felixstowe docks, so on up into Harwich to lie under Bloody Point and go down on the ebb tomorrow. The 0930 shipping forecast gave S.W. 4 - 5; rain; Galloper force 6.

Saturday dawned clear, but plenty of evidence of 'weather' to come, Sailing down to the Backwaters we saw many gaffers, but none seemed to be going our way - maybe we will be the only ones ! But no - there's one beating in - can't see who - there's another away to the South - a few spots of rain, but no matter. As we get to the No. 6, the very narrow neck of the channel, a green gaffer, Nepenthe, under engine, follows me through my tack in true Broads fashion - a half hearted wave from the helmsman, a cheerful wave from his wife, and on they go. Turning into the Twizzle, I can see three gaffers. John Morrison's Nightfall up from the Crouch with his wife and two children; Tamarisk of Maldon, up from Mersea with Vivian and Jehny Eden and their two. They had made a very fast passage of 4 hours from Mersea to Pye End. And then Nepenthe - all the way from Teddington ! They had lain at Queenborough on Thursday night - West Mersea on Friday, and had broken a forestay fitting by the Stone Banks Buoy, and so had motored in. Later, Band of Hope, also from the Crouch, motors in, then L'Atalanta, with Robert Simper and family, and Bill Cook as crew. And last of all, Secret from Maldon, sailed by John and Colin Milton.

The weather is steadily getting worse, but this doesn't stop all the ship visiting that is the prime reason for the rally. On board Band of Hope was Maurice Bailey, his son Robert, and crew Brian Watson, who came to the Backwaters via Manchester.

A visit to Nepenthe, and arrangements to go wood gathering with Martin Hiley and crew Howard Bissell, whilst Jane Hiley takes the two children for 'walkies' - very necessary when you are only 2 and 5. Stone Island is a lovely place, even in the rain, and it is good to see the bird protection notices up, asking us to keep to the fore-shore to avoid nesting birds.

The wind, by evening, is up to force 6, with rain in heavy squally, but "I've brought four sacks of wood, and I'm going to burn them" says Robert Simper. So ashore we all go. Robert is crouched over a soggy mass of paper and wood. "I've brought some diesel" he says, and pours out 6 rusty drops. "Oh, well, the tin seems to have leaked". But the fire goes.

Tarred timber, fence posts, old crates, a set of engine beds - all go to make our fire. "Have a beer" "Have a banger" "Have a whisky". Twenty six of us, and eight boats ! And then back on board Band of Hope - more beer - on to Nepenthe - coffee - and finally back to Tarka.

By morning the front has passed; the rain is stopping and the wind a steady W.S.W. 3 - 4. A full sail beat down the ^Wallet. Band of Hope Nepenthe and Nightfall through the Spitway; L'Atalanta to the Deben; Tamarisk, Secret and Tarka to the Blackwater.

A successful rally - object achieved. One final nice touch - Maurice 'phoned me on Sunday night to make sure we'd all got home.

C.R.W.

NOTES FROM THE UPPER CROUCH

The River Crouch is rather narrow ('furriners' from the Blackwater call it a ditch) and the prevailing wind blows straight down it. Hence the need for a steady old engine to punch the spring ebb back to the mooring in the failing evening breeze.

But it has its compensations when the tide goes out - large expanses of glorious mud are uncovered. The Old Gaffers here have a dedicated band of beachcombers and at low tide we prowl along the tide line to reap a rich harvest of relics of bygone days, when sailing barges brought grain to the mills at Battlesbridge and R Rochford, or loaded farm produce from the old quays along the banks.

You may find a dozen broken bits of Codd's bottles (the ones with the glass marbles) covered in mud and barnacles before you find a perfect specimen that has miraculously survived. It's a red-letter day when a truly antique Hamilton 'drunk' (with a rounded bottom) is prised carefully out of its muddy grave, or an old clay pipe with its bowl and nine inch stem still intact.

One particular beach yields fossilised sea-creatures from pre-historic times. Another, near an old flooded brick-works offers Victorian spirit, ginger beer and ink bottles. The final satisfaction came when we displayed our booty in the club and were able to send a respectable donation to the lifeboat fund.

The development of plastics, man-made fibres and high performance yachts was welcomed by beachcombers. The yachts go so fast that if anything blows off the deck they can not stop to pick it up, and when it falls into the water it floats and is eventually washed ashore. We usually manage to maintain our stock of plastic buckets, fenders, buoys, lifejackets and odd lengths of rope; but we never seem to have enough.

Your correspondent had the pleasure of sailing along the coast on the morning tide to the wedding of our Anthea and Graham in the village church at Bradwell Juxta Mare. We sang with gusto 'Thou rushing wind that art so strong,' 'Ye clouds that sail in heaven along' and 'Thou flowing water pure and clear'. The young couple were well and truly launched on the turbulent waters of matrimony and the old gaffer on top of the cake scudded along under full sail. The morning mist persisted for the sail back on the evening tide - or was it the champagne ?

Meanwhile, we have been joined by the 'Texsa', a trim little Hillyard four-tonner, complete with baggy-wrinkle. She came from the Blackwater, but is still welcome ! At Fanbridge the Olivia Mary is the first of the new ferro-concrete bawleys, looking very robust and authentic, with a very good finish.

L.J.W.

As Mr. Chad used to say 'Wot - No more regional articles ?'

SECRETARY'S MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

1976 seems to be a year for visits. Earlier in the Spring, I was surprised to receive a 'phone call from Frank Cassidy of South Natick, Massachusetts, to advise me that he was over in Aberdeen to service some oil development electronic equipment. Frank is the builder of a very beautiful Fenwick Williams designed 18' catboat, and it was very pleasant to entertain him in Galashiels for a couple of days.

This pleasant surprise visit was followed a week or two later by an afternoon visit from Mr. and Mrs. W. Ansell Tuthill from Westhampton Beach, Long Island, owners of the 1890 veteran yawl Rahnee.

Whilst we could talk about gaffers and related subjects for all the time possible, I was unable to show them any actual boats; but the next American visitors were luckier. Fenton J. Lane and his family from Seattle started their British holiday in the South, and Chris Waddington and Bob Munden were able to take them out for what sounds to have been a first class sail on Moya, and to entertain them at the R. Corinthian Y.C. in Cowes, and the R. Southern at Hamble. The sail on Moya appeared to have impressed the Lanes with the quality of hull design of the Morecambe Bay Prawners, as we spent an interesting half evening discussing the traditional British work boat types.

Since the last Newsletter my mail has included a steady trickle of bankers orders amending subscription payments. It is now quite clear that even if we do lose some members because of the increase, we shall remain a thoroughly viable body. Since the notices were sent out, three members have resigned. This leaves a large number of members from whom I have not heard. If you are amongst this number, please either send in your increased subscription very quickly, or please notify me of your intention to resign. For those who do not pay the increase, this will be their last Newsletter.

After the last Newsletter mailing, the envelopes sent to the following members were returned marked 'gone away'.

R.A.Johnson (Holyhead); P.H.Liddiard (Hillingdon); J. McHugh, (Soton); A.G.Scoones (Woodford Green) A.J.Yeatman (Swanwick).

If anybody knows the current whereabouts of these members, would they please let me know as soon as possible ?

A letter from the R.Y.A. points out that they are receiving increasingly frequent complaints about the abuse of VHF Radio.

Channel 16, which is designated for distress, safety and calling purposes only is being seriously interfered with by being used for social chit chat.

Channel 37, allocated for use by Yacht Marinas and Yacht Clubs for communication with ships, and which requires an additional £3 licence is overcrowded, and it is apparent that far more people are using it than have applied for licences.

The R.Y.A. warn that unless yachtsmen are prepared to discipline themselves, the time is approaching when the authorities will have to prosecute offenders, and they are rightly concerned that the reputation of the R.Y.A. and member clubs for responsible conduct may be harmed.

In general seamanship etc., we have established a very high reputaion indeed in the O.G.A.. I hope that no O.G.A. member is misusing V.H.F.Radio. To close this page, a topic which I suspect many of you will be wondering whether we would mention - Rabies. Please, if any yachtsmen are prosecuted for bringing pets into the country, don't let them be O.G.A. Members

J.A.S.

12.6 m. GAFF SCHOONER Designed by C.R.H.Temple.

The schooner rig is something of a rarity in British waters, although it has always been more popular on the other side of the Atlantic, and is seen there on quite small cruising yachts. It is therefore interesting to find an English yachtsman choosing a gaff schooner rig for a cruising yacht.

The brief for this design was a sturdy ocean cruising yacht, about 40 ft. L.O.A., capable of making long passages with a crew of two. (It might be added that the prospective owner is a well built 6 ft. 6 ins., with an ample supply of hauling power.)

After extensive discussions on the relative merits of every kind of rig from junk to hermaphrodite brig, the owner nailed his colours firmly to the two masts of the schooner. He argued that it gives good performance downwind, and that is the direction in which he intends to sail principally.

A fairly snug schooner rig was therefore chosen, with masts of equal height, with no complications like topmasts, topsails, or fisherman's staysails to make things difficult to handle for a small crew. The area of the mainsail has been kept within manageable proportions, and the bowsprit made reasonably short. For light weather work a large yankee jib can be set. The spars are of solid timber, and the masts are keel stepped.

The hull has short overhangs and plenty of freeboard to make her comfortable and dry at sea. The displacement is moderate for a yacht of this type, and there is sufficient ballast and beam to make her reasonably stiff, so the owner should not need to have recourse to the old Dutch saying 'The slower the boat, the longer the pleasure!'

Since the owner intends to build this yacht himself with little professional help, P.V.C. foam sandwich G.R.P. construction was chosen. This method is ideal for amateur building, and if done correctly, provides a structurally sound and extremely durable hull, which will withstand the worst extremes the sea can offer, as Great Britain II and the Ocean Youth Club boats have demonstrated. The bulkheads and interior furniture are designed as structural items contributing to the stiffness of the hull. The ballast is encapsulated in the keel to avoid the costs of casting and the problems of keel bolts. The deck and superstructure are marine ply sheathed in G.R.P.

The accommodation layout is slightly eccentric in having the galley forward and a double quarter berth aft, but this no doubt reflects the owners priorities. The rest of the accommodation is quite conventional, with a good sized chart table, a very spacious saloon, and a shower and toilet compartment forward. The focsle is a workshop, with a bench that is large enough to use, and plenty of stowage space.

A 40 hp diesel is provided for in the design for auxiliary power and any battery charging that may be necessary.

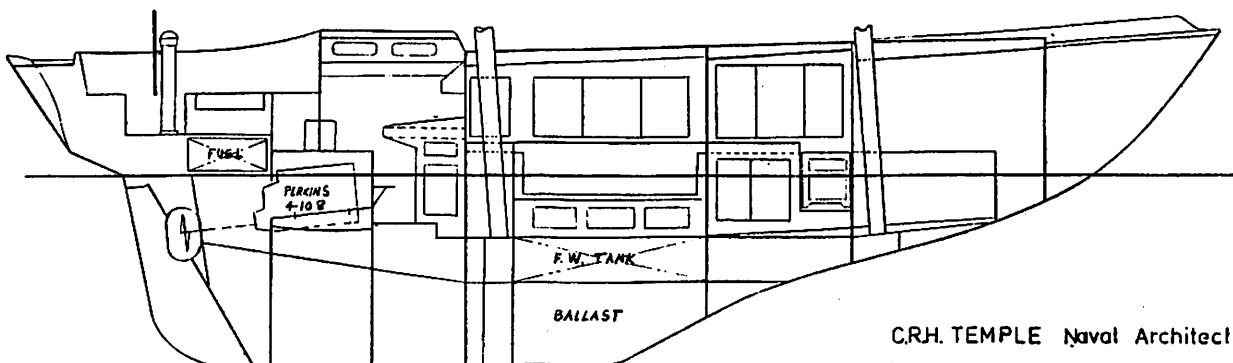
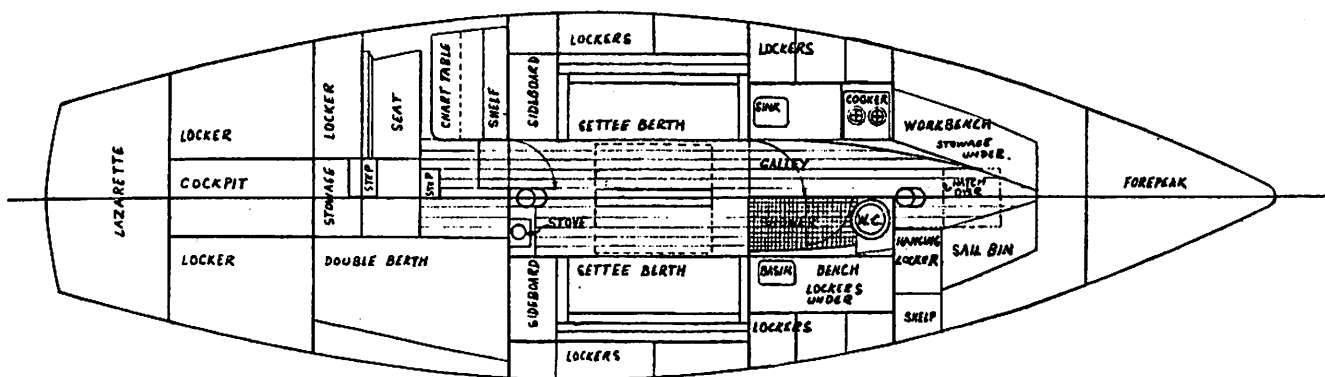
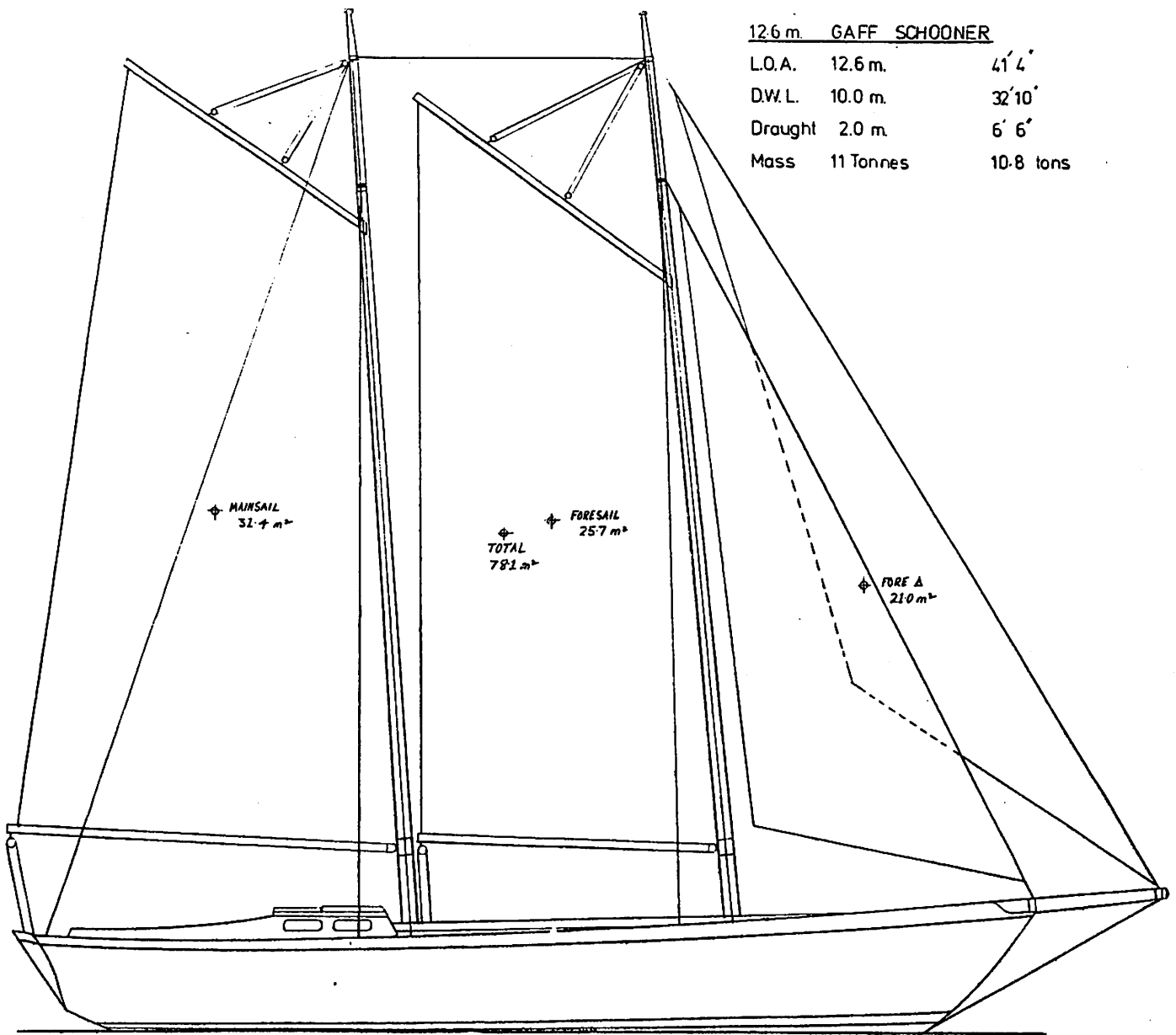
This design is conceived as a really serious cruising yacht large enough to be lived on in comfort for long periods at sea, yet simple enough in its gear and equipment to be maintained easily by the owner in the remoter parts of the world.

The layout and the rig could be varied to suit different requirements based on this general concept.

C.R.H.T.

12.6 m. GAFF SCHOONER

L.O.A.	12.6 m.	41' 4"
D.W.L.	10.0 m.	32' 10"
Draught	2.0 m.	6' 6"
Mass	11 Tonnes	10.8 tons



CR.H. TEMPLE Naval Architect & Surveyor
 The Briary, Princes Esplanade,
 Cowes, Isle of Wight, England.
 Telephone Cowes 3913

ADDITIONS TO THE REGISTER OF RACE AND RECORD NUMBERS.

Changes of name -

389 (Le Voyageur) now NORMA, with new number 650
 426 (Mirosa) now EDWARD BIRKBECK
 534 (Sea Shell) now NATIVE SEA SHELL

Additions -

694	Nepenthe	Sloop	30'	Fenton
695	East Breeze	Cutter	22'	Connell
696	Deli	Ketch	62'	
697	Lufra	Cutter	21'	Everson
698	Black Squaw	Sloop	28'	Ryton
700	Dabchick	Sloop	15'	Honnor
701	Rebecca of Tollesbury	Slp.	16'	Wyatt
702	Sue	Lug	11'	Scow
704	Maggie	Cutter	28'	
705	Flaine Too	Cutter	29'	Crabber
706	Cora A	Cutter		H. Butler
707	Lucy Foster	Ketch	27'	W. Martin
708	Torhilda	Cutter	28'	Collings
709	Ayah	Cutter	29'	Payne
710	Teal	Cutter	16'	Payne
712	Cirrus	Cutter	27'	Murray
713	Corbara	Sloop	27'	Johnson Jago
714	Maria	Cutter	42'	
715	5 Memory	Sloop	19'	Bergquist
717	Ziska	Cutter	37'	Crossfield
718	Sophie	Cutter	36'	Pearce
721	Charlotte Ellen			
722	Idaho	Cutter	18'	Inellan
724	Nova	Sloop	19'	
725	5 Gertrude	Sloop	24'	Mylne
726	Sara Ann	Cutter	36'	Cousins
727	Nerak	Cutter	30'	Hill
728	Tussler	Sloop	21'	Dauntless
729	Teal		18'	Wiggins
730	Plover	Ketch	30'	Hillyard
731	P Coriander	Cutter	20'	Howard
756	Dorothea	Cutter	38'	Thomas
903	Kestrel	Sloop	19'	Hillyard
2486	Water Wraith	Cutter	26'	Thomas

With this issue of the Newsletter, two new pages of the register are being enclosed to all members who are listed as having copies of the register. These new pages carry all the above additions EXCEPT 728 - 756 (inclusive).

If YOU have bought a copy of the Register, and can not find the update pages with this Newsletter, please let me know. Also, please let me know if you hold a copy of the register which has any gaps in it (after including the update pages).

J.A.S.

CORRESPONDENCE

The increase in subscriptions and Chris Waddington's letter in the last Newsletter brought what must be a record in notes and letters from members. The very obvious enthusiasm for the O.G.A. behind so many of these letters makes the massive task of updating all the records seem well worth while. Two letters are published here, as being typical; and sincere thanks to all of you who have taken the trouble to write such encouraging letters.

"Although I've never been able to attend an A.G.M. I heartily concur with Chris Waddington's letter.

"If any boat owner is so hard-up he cannot raise another £2.50 to pay a modest sub. of £3, then god-help the future of his old boat !

"On behalf of all our members in the S.W. I would like to thank you and all our National committee for the work you do for our fine Association. You can count on our unflagging and enthusiastic support.

"I am enclosing a copy of the 1897 Year Book for Belfast Lough. You may find it of interest. I am fortunate to have original copies for both 1897 and 1898"

Yours sincerely, George Ellison.

Mr. Ellison's suggestion that the year book might be of interest is something of an understatement. It informs the reader that the total cost of the 37'3" x 25' x 8'8" x 6'3" Class I Belfast Lough O.D., complete with nine sails (Ratsey & Lapthorn), and all deck fittings in teak was £240 ! The 24ft lug rigged Class III boat cost £52 !

"Sir,

"Just a brief note of encouragement. As a non-participating member of the Association I support the subscription increase.

In many points I support the view of Christopher Waddington and hope that the problems of Subscription etc. do not split the Association.

"As one who has received a lot of enjoyment from the magazine but who has not been able to attend meetings may I say a sincere 'Thank-you' for your efforts in producing a forum for the "Old Gaffers".

"Despite the present problems, please do not let the Association dissolve."

Yours sincerely Patrick Henderson.

"I note from the Newsletter that you are inviting comments on the use of spinnakers, and their possible ban in O.G.Races.

"Quite honestly, I don't know where I stand on this one. As Deva has no spinnaker (the old one, which was pre-war, finally gave up the ghost about two years ago) it would be to her benefit if a ban was proposed. On the other hand, since many Bmu. boats are pulling away from the old girl on a point of sailing to which she had the divine right of superiority on account of vast spinnakers, I have to confess that the economic plan for the late seventies may well include a suitable second hand addition to the wardrobe. Even now, I can always console my defeated crews (who tend to celebrate victory on the night before, during and after up to prize giving by keeping Deva's beer locker permanently open) with the excuse that because there was no spinnaker (like the winner's) we missed the tide at the turning mark, etc. etc.

"However, the implications of a ban are serious. The O.G.A. exists to further interest in the rig. This takes two directions. One is preservationist, and enthusiasts take pride in rigging a boat exactly as she was sixty years ago. The other is advancement. Here, fanatics use up to date know how in terms of gaff sails in modern materials with high aspect cut, alloy spars, etc. Both schools of thought are valid in my opinion. (Deva lifts ideas from both as a compromise).

"The Old Gaffers Races, on the other hand, have to perform on some form of equalising basis. Handicapping on performance alone sounds the best, but in annual races there is not enough data to go on. The alternative method is one of measurement. It is well known that the Bmu. rig fares better than gaff. It follows therefore that the craft with a near triangular mainsail and a highly developed foretriangle (including spinnaker) will fare better than a good old working boat with a 45° gaff and topsail, long bowsprit with a balancing jib, and sails cut for working. Results over the years in the East Coast Races point to this. How many winners have set topsails? How many, on the other hand, have had high peaked gaffs?

"Whilst much of the above has little to do with spinnakers, I hope it does show that there are unavoidable injustices in the rating system. Spinnakers probably have little effect on the names in the prize list. They just widen the gap between the winners and the also-rans. Most entrants realise this, and couldn't give a damn. The race is far more a rally. Individual competitions break out between also-rans, and often dog-fights at the back of the pack break out. In the working boat's classes, complete squadrons of smacks tear round the course oblivious of the fact that the Old Gaffers Trophy does exist.

"It's all good fun, and while it remains so, huge entry lists will continue to be the case. However, if too many rules come in the atmosphere will change, and drive away the non-racing man, whose boat may have a fine contribution to make to the occasion.

"Nevertheless it is clear that many owners feel it is cheating to fly a modern spinnaker. It is slightly degrading to see a fine old boat setting a borrowed spinnaker. It's like a duchess dressing up as a tart - not British!

"My conclusions (although not definite) are that if:-

- 1 The Old Gaffers Races are more spectacle than race
- 2 The also-rans should not be thrashed unfairly
- 3 The non-racing fraternity are to stand a chance of winning a trophy
- 4 There is a concensus of opinion that modern spinnakers are out of place

then the race instructions should REQUEST that modern spinnakers et al are not flown, as opposed to a ban. i.e., owners of fast boats are asked to have the GOOD MANNERS not to take advantage of extras no others have - which I hope is very British!

Yours sincerely Jon Wainwright"

Secretary's comment - One point on racing under handicaps which Jon has not mentioned is the great effect that a tide and weather can have on the result. Some boats sail at their best in Force 2; others in Force 5. Some boats go best in smooth water, others show up well in rougher water. Most boats can manage to find a 'critical' wavelength where they 'go up and down in the same 'ole'. In an estuary like the Blackwater, a change in the time of the start (and hence in the time relative to the tide at which the entrants round the outer marks) can change the winners list completely. So even if we did have a perfect handicapping system, the actual race results could still be quite unfair to somebody!

Jon's query on winners has made me look up records - of the 5 boats which have won the E.C.O.G. Trophy, one was a topsail cutter just such as Jon describes - a boat called Deva! Of the class prize winners, probably about a third set topsails, but several of those without topsails were 'low aspect ratio' rigs. Still, I hope that Area Committees will note Jon's rather nice suggestion!

WHAT MAKES AN OLD GAFFER ?

In previous Newsletters there has been an open-ended discussion on what constitutes an old gaffer. But how about the crew, how is he identified ?

An Old Gaffer is easily recognised in his natural habitat aboard an old gaffer, but can you spot him from fifty feet in a bus queue ?

The following physical clues may be handy for final identification

Joggle in backbone Long hours braced back against a kicking tiller notches the spine in the lumbar region

Well developed biceps Weather helm and leaks provide constant exercise.

Flattened thumbs From pressing stopping into leaking seams.

Upturned eyes The old wives tale "If they cast their eyes up they cannot be reared" does not apply to Old Gaffers. They are always looking up to check the wind and the weather, or the topsail or offering up the occasional silent prayer that everything holds.

Restricted clutch Within the limits of tiller, pump handle, and beer mug, the clutch is smooth and strong; but creaks a bit when narrowed down to hold razors, pens (for signing bankers orders and filling in boat register forms) etc.

Bleeding finger nails Red-lead or antifouling naturally accumulates under the nails despite desperate scraping.

Blotches and speckles on face and hands usually appear in springtime when it always blows a gale when painting the mast from a bosun's chair, and the paint blows off the brush.

There are also subtle sartorial clues (apart from the O.G.A. tie) and maybe our readers can offer extra guidance.

L.J.Warren

"You will be interested to learn that we are commencing the restoration of an old gaffer.

She was originally a French Crabber from Brittany, between 80 and 100 years old. She was brought over here at the time of Dunkirk, taken over by the River Patrol for use on the Thames Estuary; eventually found her way to Penzance, and finally to Fowey.

She has been laid up on the beach here at Mixton for some years, and finally her owner decided to break her up.

Fortunately, we heard of this in time, although she had already been gutted internally, and managed to purchase the hull for the traditional 'piece of silver'.

The sails and spars cost rather more, but are in good condition, and work is under way on the hull.

Length 24 feet, straight stem, steeply sloping transom, hull heavily built, original name "Petit Manoel"

Will be sailing towards the end of the year if all goes well.

C.H.Peacock

AYESHA

The 27ft cutter Ayesha is well known to many on the South Coast, particularly those who have visited Dartmouth during the 50s and 60s and stayed at the Gunfield Hotel. Owner John Lewthwaite took many of his guests sailing in Ayesha, and also raced her extensively, winning over forty trophies in her years on the Dart. After we bought her in 1974, she was completely restored and given a new lease

of life, having languished for four years up Old Mill Creek (how many Old Gaffers have met a sad and untimely end rotting on the banks of such picturesque creeks and inlets?). Re-rigged the day before (and the morning of!) the 1974 South West Area Old Gaffers Race, we managed a creditable 6th place, screwing on mainsheet cleats etc. as we completed the race. Our cruising that year was cut short by the infamous gales of August, although we did manage a trip to the Solent for the Old Gaffers Race in September, followed by some pleasant cruising between gales. And what better place to be gale-bound than the Jolly Sailor?

Our departure for the Mediterranean in 1975 was somewhat delayed by the decision to make a new mast, but we were compelled to as the perfect tree for the job was found pickling in Old Mill Creek. But Friday 13th June at 0200 hrs. saw an almost sober farewell to the Old Gaffers of Dartmouth (and to the best British summer for years - don't rub it in!)

During our leisurely potter around Brittany, we ran into Tony and Sue Myers in 'Otter' from Porth Navas - Helford River, and said our final farewells in Belle Isle as we headed for La Rochelle and B Bordeaux. The Canal du Midi was an unforgettable experience and an enjoyable contrast to our coastal cruising. 500 Km. by Seagull, and she never missed a beat! The rest of the summer was spent along the south coast of France as far as St. Tropez (its image perhaps a little tarnished now, if not the expensive status symbols which still litter its harbour) and then down to Corsica and the Emerald Coast of Northern Sardinia.

We were delighted to see the East Coast fishing smack Iris, CK67 in Propriano (S.W.Corsica). She is now owned by a Breton, Yvonne le Carre, is in beautiful condition, and still without any form of engine - which is quite an achievement in the Mediterranean where the winds are often fickle to say the least! We have heard from Yvonne in Marseille recently and it sounds as if Iris will be heading for the Canaries and Brazil in June.

Ayesha has spent the winter laid up in Olbia, Sardinia, a somewhat unattractive but charming town full of genuinely friendly and helpful people (apart from the Customs, who charged us 21% duty on our charts). After the annual refit, we are now ready to set sail once again - this time for Corfu via Ponza, Ischia and the Straits of Messina. We have just spent a wet and windy Easter in Olbia listening to the B.B.C. reports of sunshine in Britain, and wondering how often someone in the Mediterranean could be jealous of British weather!

After an absence of 9 years, we have committed ourselves to returning home to Tasmania by the end of this year, and so three months of cruising Greek waters will bring us to the point where we must sadly part company with Ayesha, and leave somebody else to continue her story. Hopefully she will find her way back to the shores of England to be loved anew, for surely all Old Gaffers live by love?

David & Will Tanner

ADVERTISEMENTS

FOR SALE Wavelet (593) 28.5ft. gaff yawl, built as yacht 1904 at Blyth. Good condition, beautiful lines; 4 berths; 8 H.P. engine, as new Terylene sails. Lying Plymouth. £3400 o.n.o.

P. Seldon, Whitehall, Buckland Monachorum, Devon.
Tel 082 285 2871.

ARE YOU INSURED? If not, why not get a proposal form for the O.G.A. insurance scheme from the Hon. Sec. (Galashiels)?

ADVERTISEMENTS

I am in the process of re-rigging me ex Bristol Channel Pilot Cutter 'Mascotte'. My little ship is 60ft long, with 14'6" beam. She was built in 1904 by her pilot, Thomas Cox and his son, also Thomas. Most of her is still original. What I am looking for is a suit of second hand sails in any material and condition to tide me over for about a year until I get new ones made. Her rig is about 35ft. with a 37ft boom (loose footed). Size is only approximate as I would have to get any other sails tailored to fit.

Kieran Markham, Mascotte, Canal Rd., Strood, Kent. Tel Medway 721794

FOR SALE Cutter Ayesha (182). Royal Mersey Restricted Class, built at Birkenhead in 1923, of pitch pine on oak. Completely restored in 1974 with new deck, superstructure, accommodation, spars, etc. 33ft x 27ft x 8.3ft x 4ft; 7 tons T.M.. Seven sails, all terylene except jib, which is fitted with roller furling gear. Four berths, settee, table, enclosed head, galley fitted with gas cooker, sink, water pump and spacious stowage. Depth sounder, RDF, log, compass and all equipment required for extensive cruising. Seagull Century P Plus auxiliary. Hutchinson inflatable tender.

This fast old gaffer was successfully raced on the South Coast for 15 years and is reputed to have made the first singlehanded circumnavigation of Britain. Her present owners are now completing a two year cruise in the Mediterranean, and she will be available in Greece at the end of July, or can be delivered elsewhere by arrangement. Price £4,500. For complete details, photographs, etc., contact Trevor Vincett, 30, Crowthers Hill, Dartmouth, Devon. Tel (08043) 2035.

WANTED Surplus iron fittings, gaff saddles, blocks, portlights, etc. to suit 45' gaff ketch.

John Spiers, c/o Moorhouse, Butleigh-Wooton, Glastonbury, Somerset.

WANTED 1 D.F.Set; 2 4-6 man liferaft, possibly in part exchange for C-craft 10' inflatable; 3 Topsail - luff approx 10' if jib headed, longer if set on yard. 4 Largish quantity of tallow; 5 Staysail - luff approx. 20' or less, cotton or terylene, or indeed any unwanted headsails which may suit 32' cutter. 6 Charts of the Baltic.

Philip Meakins, c/o Meadows end, Winchester Rd., Alresford, Hants.

FOR SALE Semper Fidelis. 21'6" Hillyard cutter, built 1939. New engine 1975; terylene main, staysail and jib; canvas storm jib and trysail. £2,500 o.n.o.,

K.C.J.Hughes, Skipper Cottage, 18, Riverside, Padstow, Cornwall

FOR SALE Gipsy (12) Gaff cutter built 1895. Winner of Class II in the 1974 East Coast Old Gaffers Race. 25ft x 8 ft x 4 ft. Clipper bow, counter stern, flush deck. Teak and pitch pine on oak frames. Three berths, gas stove. Three terylene sails; S/S rigging, 6 H.P. engine, echo sounder. Damaged stern and port side. £750. G. Peers, 4, Thirkleby Crescent, Grimsby, S. Humberside Tel (0472) 63179.

I have just raised from the mud here a 32ft cutter, originally built by Forrest & Son of Wivenhoe in 1893. It is carvel build, round bilge, with twin cylinder Coventry diesel. She sank here 8 weeks ago after 18 months of neglect by her owner. I bought her and removed the silt and refloated her as I did not like to see such a lovely old ship die. but I have neither the time nor money to restore her, so will sell to a good home for £500. Colin Orchard, Reynolds Riggers Ltd., John Kennedy Rd., Kings Lynn Norfolk PE30 2HG. Home Telephone, Snettisham 317.

FOR SALE Venture (220) 35' x 10.5' x 4.5' (+ extra 11' over bowsprit) Morecambe Bay Prawner yacht, built about 1925. Considerably overhauled in recent years and appears in excellent order. Survey report 1974 good; survey April 1975 (no copy) for Oban angling licence. Oak frames, pitch pine planks. Petters twin air cooled diesel, hand start, excellent condition about 900 hours. Sails - main 10 oz terylene, triple straight stitch, 3 reefs. Foresail, 8 oz Terylene; foresail, heavy canvas. Flying jib, 10 oz Terylene, all new 1975/76.

No electrics - all systems oil/kalor. SL400 toilet, etc. Comfortably fitted out (normally owners home).

Venture is a fast, good looking vessel of great seaworthiness and character, among the best of her type left. May deliver as far as Cornwall. Haggling, best over £6000. Owner buying another vessel for commercial work.

Write to Jay Creswell, Kenilworth, Gannock Rd., Deganwy, Conway, Gwynedd (tel 0492 81933). Mail will be forwarded to wherever vessel is.

Our Welcome to new members appears a bit later than usual in this issue, but is none the less sincere !

- A.J.Richardson, 18, Raymond Rd., Southampton
Rhoda Gostelow 126
- V. Eden, 45, Mayfield Gardens, Brentwood, Essex
Tamarisk of Maldon 569
- P. Ravic, 78, Lodge Lane, Romford, RM5 2EJ Essex
Shy Talk 446
- J. Pinner, c/o Island Cruising Club, Salcombe, South Devon
Poseidon 484
- M. Hiley, No 7, Buckingham Gardens, Hurst Park, E. Molesey, Surrey
Nepenthe 694
- E.W.Venner, Rosebank Cottage, 62, Coast Rd., West Mersea, Essex
East Breeze 695
- W.A.Tuthill, 50, Sheppard St., Westhampton Beach, Long Island,
New York 11978, U.S.A. Rahnee
- R.V.B.Hibberd, Flat over Allanbank Motors, 120 Victoria Rd.,
Ferndowne, Wimborne, Dorset Dilkusha 270
- C.W.Faulkner, Ocean Youth Club, Old Custom House, Sydney St.,
Brightlingsea, Essex Maggie 704
- A. Whinney, Manor Farm, Sherborne St. John, Basingstoke, Hants.
Flaine Too 705
- R.S.Saville, Woodlands, Priory Lane, Bicknacre, Chelmsford,
Essex
- P.G.W.Meakins, c/o Meadows End, Winchester Rd., Alresford, Hants.
Undine 581
- W.E.Upchurch, 106A Fairway Avenue, West Droyton, Middlesex UB7 7AP
Lucy Foster 707
- T. MacKay, Torhilda, 52, St. Kathrines Way, London E1
Torhilda 708
- Enid Musson, 16, Inglewood Road, London NW 6
Spray 548
- E. Bergquist, The Square, Lymm, Cheshire
Memory 715
- M. Herbert, Milton Villa 45, Main Rd., Hermitage, Emsworth
Hants. Charity (Bmu)
- D.C.Alexander 15, Lomand Crescent, Beith, Ayrshire
Mingulay (Bmu)
- D.R.Patch, 40, Crescent Rd., Heybridge, Maldon, Essex CM9 7SN
Storm 118
- R.L.Carlton, Maria, c/o Dixon Kerly Ltd., Downs Rd., Maldon Esx.
Maria 714
- J. Baldwin, 3, Roundbush Cottages, Mundon, Nr. Maldon, Essex

G. Pears, 82, Lexden Rd., Colchester, Essex
 Rose of Paglesham 508
 I. Rutherford, 20, Poplar Avenue, Countesthorpe, Leicester LE8 3SP
 C. Wherry, 14, Radford Rd., West Hoe, Plymouth, Devon
 Sophie 718
 C. Marsden, Elim Cottage, Broads Lane, Mylor Down, Falmouth,
 Cornwall
 Rosemary 506
 P.J.G.Pendred, 10, Langside, Kilbarchan
 Idaho 722
 A.J.Gordon 54 Baronald Drive, Glasgow G12 OHW
 Gertrude 725
 G.A.Millar 581, Shields Rd., Glasgow G41 2RW
 Tussler 728
 W.S.Humphries, 38, Windsor Rd., Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 2EL
 Dorothea 756
 A & W.J. Stephens, 9, Woodridings Avenue, Pinner, Middlesex HA5 4NQ
 C.R.Hall, Yt. Plover, c/o A.H.Moody & Son, Swanwick Shore, Swanwick
 Southampton
 Plover 730
 E.A.Farthing, Feldy, Bury Rd., Lawshall, Bury St. Edmunds,
 Suffolk
 Coriander 731
 M.J.Wheeler, c/o T.S.Royalist, Sea Cadet Office, H.M.S.Dolphin,
 Gosport, Hants.
 Breeze 732

OLD GAFFERS ASSOCIATION STOCK

House Flags 20" x 16"	£5.00	Burgees - 18"	£2.75
Metal lapel badges	£0.35	24"	£3.25
Ties	£1.50	36"	£4.50
Transfers, per dozen	£0.40		

Please order all stock directly from

B.C.Munden, 196, Kirby Road, Portsmouth, Hants.,
 making all cheques etc. payable to The Old Gaffers Association.

CLYDE OLD GAFFERS RACE The Neptune S.C. at Faslane will again be putting on a race for Old Gaffers on Saturday, September 25th. At the time of going to press, course and time of start have not been settled, but it is probably a mid morning start, with a course in the Helensburgh to Loch Long area. Full details, entry forms, etc. from Surgeon Commander Biggs, H.M.S.Neptune, Faslane, Helensburgh, Dunbartonshire.

A Race for old Gaffers will be held in conjunction with the annual Swale Smack and Sailing Barge Race on Saturday, August 21st.
 Entry forms from - Hon. Secretary, Kentish Sail Association,
 5, Station Road, Faversham, Kent.