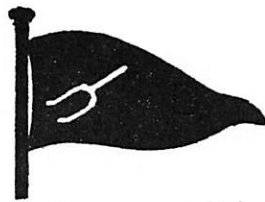
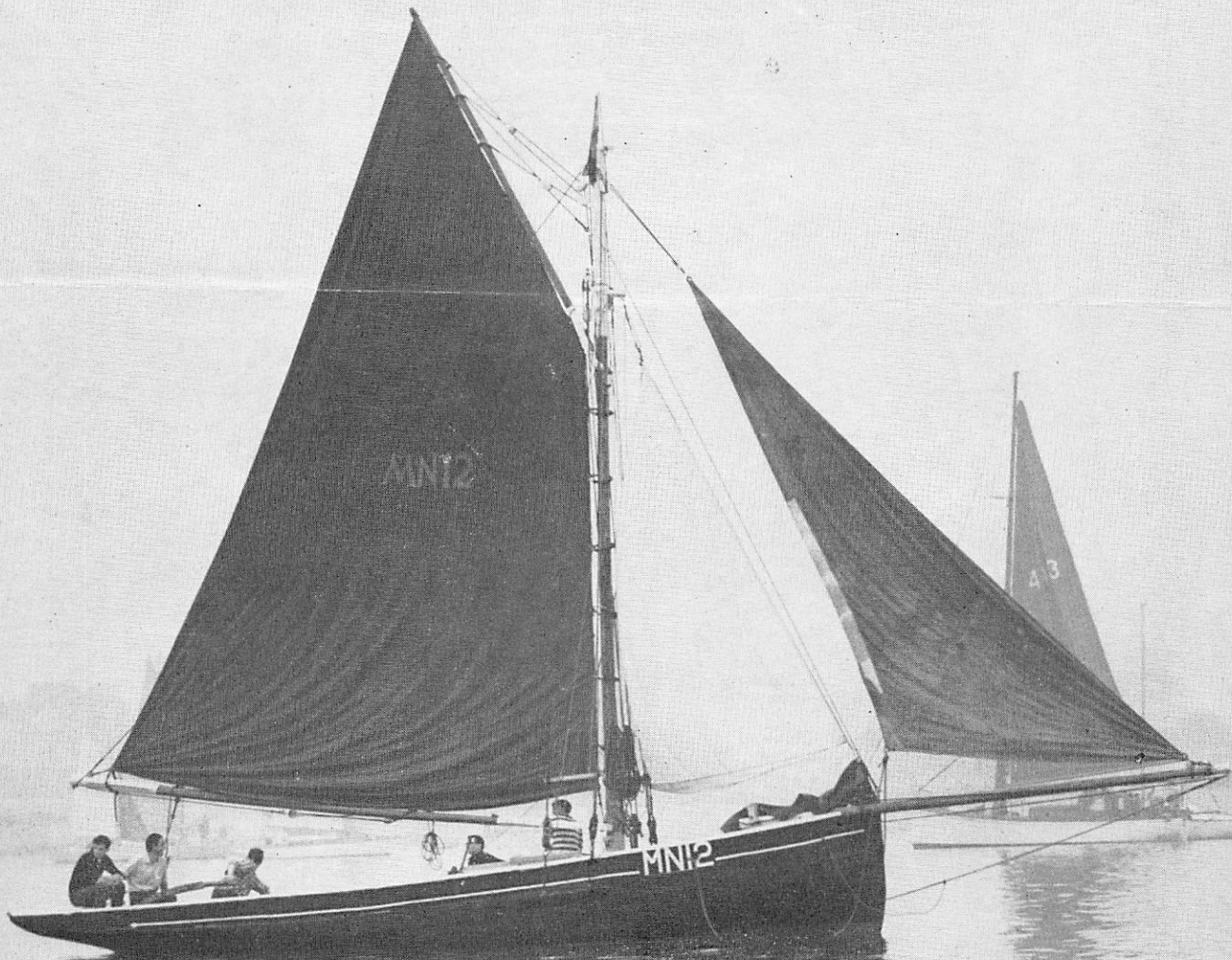


1973/3 F



# Old Gaffers Association

## Newsletter



COPYRIGHT **The Old Gaffers Association**

'Braeside' 2 Greenbank St. Galashiels, Selkirkshire,

10. 11. 1964

11. 11. 1964

12. 11. 1964

13. 11. 1964

14. 11. 1964

15. 11. 1964

## NEWSLETTER 1973/3

### DIARY DATES

Saturday November 3rd. Social evening and East Coast Area meeting at the Maldon Little Ship Club.

Friday November 9th. Social evening and Solent Area A.G.M. at the Emsworth Slipper Sailing Club.

Saturday January 12th 1974. Association Annual General Meeting and social get-together.

PLEASE NOTE THE NEW VENUE:

The Stag, 15 Bressenden Place, London, S.W.1.

This is round the back of the Victoria Palace, and is handy for main line trains, circle line, Victoria line tube trains, Red Arrow bus services and coach services.

The bar will be open at 6 p.m., and the business meeting will start at 7.30.

The proprietors of the Stag would prefer us to have a meal if we are booking a room for the evening. We have managed to get the room without having to insist that all members attending must pay for a meal (which is often necessary when booking rooms in licensed premises in London) but we shall generate more good will if as many members as possible do try and arrange to attend and partake of the buffet which will be available at £1.50 per head after the meeting. A booking form for this buffet will be included in the next issue of the Newsletter.

Saturday July 27th 1974. East Coast Race.

It is hoped to be able to arrange a social evening in Glasgow during the winter. If this proves possible before the next issue of the Newsletter, all members in the area will be notified direct.

### AN APOLOGY

On behalf of the Officers and Committee of the Association I must offer to all members sincere apologies for the lateness of our last two Newsletters. The new printing arrangements which were set up at the last Annual General Meeting have suffered from a breakdown in communications. This has resulted in the delays of up to six weeks in the production of the Newsletters, even greater delays in the delivery of membership forms, and a total failure in the supply of other 'office paperwork'.

At the time of writing this apology (October 5th) I have not seen a copy of the second issue for 1973. The material in the first issue was not what I sent in to our printers, and I have no means of knowing what will appear in No. 2.

These serious delays in printing have so hampered the running of the Association that after consultation with our President, Assistant Secretary and other committee members I have made

2.

arrangements to get the printing done locally. This issue will be the first trial of the new system. To be able to get the printing, collating, folding and packing done by one firm we have had to revert to duplicated text. Whilst this reversion from the superior appearance of offset printing is regretted, it is hoped that there will be a benefit in substantially faster production than we have ever had in the past.

The next issue will go to Press on November 23rd, 1973.

Thereafter deadline dates for copy will be: March 1st; July 31st, or one week after the East Coast Race, whichever is earlier; September 30th, or one week after our last race of the season; and November 21st.

Copy should be sent to me at Braeside, 2 Greenbank Street, Galashiels, Selkirkshire TD1 3BL.

Would all members please note that our 'small ads' for boats, gear, etc. are free to members, so it is worth stating clearly what you have to offer.

If any member knows of any person who has recently applied for membership and is wondering what has happened about his application, would he please pass on my sincere apologies and explain that the application will be dealt with as soon as I can get the necessary paperwork printed. These delays have made it impossible to include in this Newsletter our usual list of new members.

J.A.S.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

The last check through the membership list showed a regrettable large number of members who have not paid a subscription for 1973. Until we have properly established a permanent printing system for the Newsletters it is not possible to send out reminders to defaulters with the Newsletters. There are too many defaulters to send out individual reminders.

So, if you have not paid a subscription this year, and you wish to remain a member, please pay NOW. I'm sure our 50p. subscription will not break you.

## R.Y.A. MEMBERSHIP

Issue No. 2 should have included an appeal from the R.Y.A., which explains why they want yachtsmen to join. With this issue we are sending out R.Y.A. membership forms. If you are not already a member of the R.Y.A., then please join NOW. If you are a member, then please persuade your crew to complete the enclosed form. If sufficient people join the R.Y.A. on the enclosed forms before the end of the year, the O.G.A. will get a rebate on the first year's R.Y.A. subscription.

### COVER PICTURE

Our cover picture this issue is MN12, POLLY, being sailed near Osea Pier in one of our East Coast Races by Ian Edmond. Polly was one of the small oyster smacks built by the celebrated builder of spritsail barges, John Howard, at his yard on North Street, Maldon, in 1892. She was originally built with a transom stern, of the normal pine on oak construction, with a small cuddy forward of the mast and fish hold below the main deck aft of the mast.

In 1919 she was extended to 33 feet long by the addition of the counter stern, which was built on by Cooke at his barge yard at the other end of Maldon Town Quay from Howard's old yard (which was then being run by Dan Webb).

Until 1955 she was owned by the Pitt family of Maldon, who used her regularly for fishing. Of all the Maldon and Brightlingsea built smacks which used to lie on the bank of the Blackwater below the quay, Polly was the only one without an engine in the early 1950s, and in those days it was often said that the fact that she had never been subjected to the strains and vibrations of an engine resulted in her fastenings being in much better condition than any of the other boats. Certainly as Wally and Ernie Pitt had only the sails to propel them up and down the Blackwater her running rigging was easily the best in the fleet. Wally and Ernie were a familiar sight on the river, often beating up to their mooring early on the flood, tacking up the narrow channel without saying a word, but in 1955 they decided they were getting too old to carry on fishing, so they sold Polly to John Kemp of Heybridge, who in turn sold her to Ian Edmond in 1960.

Polly missed the first East Coast Old Gaffers Race, but Ian brought her along in 1964, and sailed a very fine race in a light breeze to be the first winner of the Tom Bolton Memorial Cup for the first fishing or ex-fishing boat over the finishing line. In this Ian was helped by Polly's relatively large sail area and her very fine, unusually long run aft.

In 1966, Ian sold Polly to a Mr. Williams of Brightlingsea, and although she was entered for further East Coast Races she did not perform so well as she had in the three years Ian raced her in our fleet.

This is not the first time a picture of Polly has been used for a cover, as the dust jacket of Volume 1 of Edgar J. March's 'Inshore Craft of Britain in the Days of Sail and Oar' shows Polly as she was near the end of her working life, and shows very clearly the extreme length of her boom and bowsprit.

### OUR ASSOCIATION - TEN YEARS OF GROWTH

With this issue of the Newsletter, it is ten years since the Old Gaffers Association was formally founded by a resolution passed at a gathering of some forty owners and friends at the Maldon Little Ship Club on Saturday, September 14th, 1963.

The real beginning of the Association as a Nationwide body could perhaps be said to date from Saturday, June 22nd of that year, when I had the great pleasure of sailing with John Clarke on Maresca in the Old Gaffers Race on the Solent. John, Alec Rangabe and Mike Richardson had been running Old Gaffers Races for five years, as a private venture, and when John Bray, myself, and some other enthusiasts felt there was a demand for a similar

4.

race on the East Coast, John Clarke and I agreed that an Association ought to be formed to ensure the continuity of the races, and to try and bring together for mutual benefit the 'piratical individuals' who owned and sailed gaffers.

On that glorious June day, as we fought our way up the West Solent we discussed most of the main features of how such a proposed body might work, but we agreed to wait until after the forthcoming East Coast Race before calling any meetings to form an Association.

The first East Coast Race on July 20th, 1963, was hardly a success as a race, but the 33 entrants all enjoyed the day so much that it was decided to go ahead and form the Association.

So at the Prizegiving party for the first East Coast Old Gaffers Race, on September 14th, 38 East Coast sailors voted to form the O.G.A.; to be joined as soon as communications allowed by 24 enthusiasts from the regular entrants in the older Solent Race.

The birth of the new organisation was marred in less than a fortnight by the loss at sea of one of the keenest of the East Coast members, Tom Bolton, who was missing, presumed drowned when the 2½ ton cutter Snipe was wrecked off the North Foreland whilst on passage from Ramsgate to Whitstable. This tragedy occupied a third of our first Newsletter - a single sided foolscap sheet!

Since then, membership has grown at about 50 members per year, with the lowest rate of increase (33) in 1969, and the highest (122) in 1972. Of the original 62 founder members, 41 still remain with us, and of the new members who have joined since 1963, over two thirds remain as keen, regular members. Since the O.G.A. was founded, approximately 960 people have joined, and our current membership is about 750 (which may include some who STILL have not paid their Subscription for 1973 and should really be deleted).

Interest in the Association has spread, and we now have members scattered widely round the world, with the strongest concentration outside the U.K. in California.

Our Newsletters have expanded over the years from our first single-sided sheet, with 66 copies run off. Many members have sent in outstanding contributions, several of which have been re-published in the Yachting Press and in the journals of other organisations. Our first illustrated issue came at the end of 1964, but in later years not many pages of pictures have been included. Up to the end of 1972, 44 issues of the Newsletter were published. The earliest issues were duplicated by a local agency, and we made up the copies, addressed and posted them. By 1965 my typewriter was disintegrating under the strain of O.G.A. work, and a ten shilling entry fee was introduced and all current members were asked to donate ten shillings to a 'typewriter fund'. However, before we bought the typewriter, a sharp increase in the cost of duplication caused the Committee to buy a duplicator, and from then on the Newsletters were totally a 'do it yourself' venture.

The Newsletter headings progressed from a small rubber stamp to printed heads on the first page, then to separate cover sheets; addressing progressed through handwritten addresses, computer print-out back sheets, and on to machine addressed envelopes. The volume of work to be handled grew with each issue, and a check shows that up to the end of 1972 over 5 tons of foolscap paper had been printed, collated, stapled, folded and posted from our Maldon home in the form of Newsletters.

There has been other paperwork as well. Rules, membership forms, boat register forms, and the more recent booklets.

Over the years the volume of correspondence has been enormous, but I think it can truthfully be said that apart from certain matters in the last 6 months it has all been a great pleasure to handle.

The boat register has grown steadily - not as rapidly as was hoped, but there is now available quite a useful amount of factual data on gaffers, and most of the technical queries from members can be dealt with fairly promptly without overmuch outside digging to unearth vital facts.

Also the race programmes published over the ten years form a unique and very valuable record of the histories of a surprisingly large number of really interesting craft.

Like most other similar bodies, we have our Association Tie, and several members have found that this can be useful as an introduction to other sailing clubs when touring or cruising.

Over the ten years, we have enjoyed good publicity in the Yachting Press, the National Press and on local television, and it is gratifying to see so many boats advertised in Yachting magazines as 'performs well in Old Gaffers Races' or 'suitable for entry in Old Gaffers Races'. Correspondence from other organisations has demonstrated clearly that the O.G.A. is regarded in many places as a Preservation Society, and our efforts to preserve old boats and traditions are looked on as being very well worth while.

Probably our most useful achievement in our ten years of existence is the O.G.A. insurance scheme. As more and more people (with less and less knowledge of boats and seamanship) flocked to buy small cruising boats (?) and racing dinghies, so the claims on insurers went up, and they retaliated by turning on their older and often better clients, raising the premiums on older craft and refusing to take new policies on boats over fixed ages - in many cases 10 years. A great deal of effort was expended in trying to get adequate cover for our members. The possibilities of a mutual insurance scheme were aired, and a couple of sympathetic brokers were found, but ultimately one of our members managed to persuade an underwriter that an old boat owned by an enthusiast is not necessarily a bad risk, and we were able to offer members a proper commercial scheme.

This year saw the first South Western Race and Clyde Race, and interest is being raised in races in the Bristol Channel and Morecambe Bay - which will bring at least one race per year within the reach of almost every owner in the U.K. Our original two races have grown beyond all recognition. Both are now widely recognised as major events, and we are helped in their running by the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club at Cowes and Stone Sailing Club on the East Coast. With entries in the 50s or 60s on the Solent, and 80s or 90s on the East Coast, both races now involve the organisers in a massive amount of pre-race paperwork and a very hectic day indeed on Race Day. As the races have grown, so have the number of helpers, but all race committees could still use more regular and reliable helpers.

One respect in which our organisation is unusual, and possibly unique, is the infrequency with which committee meetings are called. One major area has managed to hold only three formal meetings of its committee in ten years! The spread of membership of the committees dictates that much of the business must be conducted

6.

by post, and when there is time for the necessary letters to be sent this system has worked admirably. In fact the only essential meeting of the main O.G.A. Committee had to be called when I found myself faced with a move almost to the other end of the country at little over a month's notice.

The success of this policy of 'let the workers get on with the job and eliminate the chairborne timewasters' has been adequately demonstrated by the growth and success of the Association. And not only by the growth in the membership list, but also by the growth of our bank balance to the point where it worries our treasurer.

We have been more than lucky in our treasurer. In our earlier growth years, some of our senior members got very worried over finances, and treasurer Tom Cook had to talk very persuasively indeed to persuade them not to try raising the annual subscription. Instead, a number of members guaranteed to lend the Association any money it might need if we ran short. Thanks to Tom's wise guidance it has never been necessary to call on our guarantors, and without increasing our subscription we have built up a very comforting balance. (One wonders how many other organisations have held the subscription constant over the past ten years.)

The ten years have not been without their crises. The work has not all gone smoothly, but so far, the determination of all concerned to do their utmost to co-operate in helping the Association to benefit its members has overcome the obstacles that have arisen. We would seem to be fortunate in that the great majority of our members appear to be far more interested in the end product of a smoothly run and successful organisation than whether the appropriate people have attended all the right committee meetings. We are also fortunate in having a loyal group of hard workers who are prepared to put the O.G.A. and its well-being above their own personal feelings and difficulties.

So in ten years we have grown from a small group (or rather two even smaller, very local, groups) to a large international body. What will the next ten years bring? There is no reason why our growth in several other countries should not be as good as it has been here in the U.K. We have one insurance scheme - perhaps this might extend to other countries? We have a member who has started a 'veteran boats gear store' - surely this can expand. We now have far more than our original two area races - the newer ones can grow. Indeed, the future outlook for the O.G.A. is very bright indeed.

#### THE SOLENT RACE

The fact that there was not a single Class I boat amongst the first sixteen on corrected time gives some indication that there might not have been much wind; that the first boat to start (Lady Belle) took over five minutes to cross the Line after the gun, only nine had started in the first half-hour, fourteen in the first hour, and it took  $3\frac{1}{4}$  hours to get the whole fleet away, hints that there might have been a bit of foul tide to contend with. Considering this, it is pleasing to report that out of a total of 68 entrants, of whom 2 withdrew before the start, 59 actually started, 33 completed the two-lap course, and the remaining 26 managed one round.

The light easterly wind which appeared in the early morning was forecast to freshen to force 4 or 5, and veer to S.E.; it never managed it; the best we ever saw was force 3, and then only fitfully. The tide was neap, but that meant at least a couple of knots west-going at Prince Consort Buoy one hour after high water, which was about when the starting gun was fired.

Initially, those who tacked well into Cowes Harbour and across the Shraps fared best, and got away, if in slow time; an hour later it was more profitable to stand well out to the northward and to creep over the slacker stream in the shadow of the Brambles, before tacking in to the Line.

There were, afterwards, one or two mutterings that the start should have been directed to the westward; but had this been done, half the fleet would have been the wrong side of the Line at the gun, with no hope of getting back, while the rest would have hurtled out through the Needles before they could have unfouled their kedges.

Quite soon after the Start, the fleet was spread in a great confusion, apparently all over the Solent, each boat looking for a breath more wind, a touch less tide. Some kedged, some drifted gently backwards, only to creep ahead again a few minutes later; some tried short-tacking close in under the R.Y.S. Castle, and at least one found the rocks that lurk there.

Observers on the R.C.Y.C. Line soon lost track of the overall picture in the concentration of checking the boats crossing the line. A slight freshening of the breeze - they were moving better now - but ought the course to be shortened to one lap? If so, it must be done before the first boat completes that lap . . . and there was Paguera coming in after one round with a dozen or more boats still trying to start! It was only a few minutes past one o'clock, and nearly five hours to the time-limit; it would have been a shame to curtail what was at least a beautiful afternoon's sailing - so they were allowed to continue.

During the afternoon, the Committee's principal worry was that of identification. Most boats were admirably labelled with name and number, and thanks are due to those owners who took trouble over this; but there were the inevitable handful, and they had to be the least distinguishable vessels, which were virtually anonymous; in one case it was the owner rather than the boat which was recognised!

It was good to have the two Solent based Ocean Youth Club's Equinoxe and Duet, joined by the Island Cruising Club's two big 'uns, Hoshi and Provident. Together with the classic racing yacht Kelpie and pilot cutter Marguerite I, the top end of Class I presented as wide a variety of Gaffers as one could wish to see in one race. It was unfortunate that the two latter decided upon a picnic on the Brambles during their second lap (not alone, we understand!) or the prize list may well have had a different appearance.

Apart from the I.C.C. entries, and Kelpie, we were glad to welcome from the West Country: Elizabeth Mary, Golden Vanity (safely home after her transatlantic amblings), Sall and Sandpiper, and were sorry that Fern could not make it. Wilful and Tamarisk were equally welcome from the East Coast, and as anything beyond the North Foreland must be further from Cowes than is Plymouth, it was apparent that the Pitchfork must go to one of these. Two East Coast members of the O.G.A. Central Committee therefore went into a huddle with a chart, and, rather to their own surprise, discovered that the shorter navigable route was to Wivenhoe, so Mick Willett took the Pitchfork 1.6 miles further to Burnham in Wilful.

The new Commodore of the Solent Area is Graham Jelley, Piskie's second owner to bring her to victory and the Channel Cup. David Ettling achieved his ambition to bring Paguera in first over the line for the Dead-Eye, as well as comfortably clearing his time for the Channel Plate. Bart Pot in Dreva beat Gaivota into second place this year, so took the Le Havre Plate for the second time, while Fancy pipped Betty by only a few seconds for the Emsworth Cleat. Siskin's handicap failed this time to put her ahead of Alan, who thus took the Quiver Trophy. Peter Boyce from Weymouth in Little Apple was the first winner of the Edgar March Memorial Trophy for a working or ex-working boat, and Equinoxe was awarded the C.H. Paxton Memorial Trophy for having given us the pleasure of her company for several years without getting anywhere. Last to start (after spending a long time going smartly backwards) and get home for supper was Hoshi, to win the Anchor Trophy; and last to finish at exactly 1800 hours, Oriette neatly gained the Laggards Ladle.

Supper at the R.C.Y.C. was graced by the presence of Mrs. Edgar March, who had given the work-boat Trophy in memory of her late husband. Afterwards, she very kindly presented the prizes, having first said a few words in commendation of his writings.

M.D.M.

#### CLYDE RACE

The inaugural Clyde Old Gaffers Race on Saturday September 22nd followed the same pattern as the South Western and Solent Race - almost a non-event through lack of wind!

This race was a departure from the usual O.G.A. Races in that racing with the Gaffers were some vintage Bermudian rigged boats, and the event was at least nominally a joint venture by the O.G.A. and the Royal Naval Sailing Association Neptune Sailing Club, Faslane. In fact the R.N.S.A. (mainly in the person of Lt. Cdr. Sam Poole) did virtually all the work and laid on the necessary facilities, leaving me only the handicapping of the gaffers. As Sam is an O.G.A. member, I suppose we can claim some credit for the event!

Ten o'clock in the morning saw 17 widely assorted gaffers plus 15 vintage Bermudian boats gathered off Helensburgh Pier, trying to maintain steerage way in the very light airs, and waiting for the starting gun, which had been postponed to 10.10.

For a change in O.G.A. races, nobody was over the line at the start. First away was Robert Cowie of Kilcreggan in Lenore, one of Fife's 17/19 Clyde Class, built in 1895. She was closely followed by Thistle, Dr. Andrew Motherwell's ex 6 Rater, designed by A. Mylne and built by A. Malcolm at Port Bannatyne in 1909. Her varnished hull with its very long overhangs slid through the water beautifully, and she soon established a commanding lead. A couple of vintage boats followed her over, then Mr. Johnson's big ketch rigged Colin Archer, Nordfjord crept up to the line by the distance mark, but was unable actually to cross the line for another four minutes.

T.C. Duggan's Hildasay came next - a fairly new boat, being a copy of the lines of a Shetland Sixareen built in 1951 by Allcraft of Lerwick. Unfortunately the tide and light wind carried her on to the bows of the Committee boat, the Q.H.M.'s barge Suzy Wong, and she had to circle back and re-start, which she managed

in about fourteen minutes, to start about half way down the combined fleet.

After Hildasay's first start the fleet crept on over the line steadily if slowly, until 40 minutes after the gun the big ketch Soldian, which had been used for some years as a training ship at Gordonstoun School, got away, followed by J. Hamilton's 36 foot schooner Miranda - the oldest boat in the race, being a converted Loch Fyne fishing smack built in 1884, and on which Mr. Hamilton had worked very hard to get her more or less fit to enter after 14 years lying neglected in MacAlister's Yard. Luckily for the honour of gaff rig, the Bermudian cutter Vegan was the very last starter, 48 minutes after the gun.

Most of the fleet crept their slow way across the mouth of the Gareloch and down the Kilcreggan shore, but Sam Poole in his Morecambe Bay prawner Wender and some others found themselves on the wrong tack heading out across the Clyde towards Tail of the Bank, with insufficient way on to come about. In Wender's case this was most unfortunate as it certainly cost Sam many places in the race and made it quite impossible to compare the performance of a shoal draft workboat hull type against that of the very deep keeled locals on a handicapping system based solely on the dimensions of the boats.

As the day wore on the fleet crept slowly down past Kilcreggan, and on to the mouth of the Holy Loch, with Suzy Wong dashing up and down the fleet as the Race Officers aboard her did elaborate and involved calculations to find out where they ought to stop the race on a shortened course so that the back markers could have a fair chance of motoring to Colintrave to be present at the post race party.

The difficulties involved in securing a mark in 65 fathoms (or for that matter securing Suzy Wong) led to a straight choice between a finish at the Warden Bank off Dunoon or at the corner of the course at Toward Point. The continued lack of any real wind, plus a dash of rain which looked as if it might kill what wind there was settled the issue to a finish at Warden Bank, and this was duly implemented, just in time to time in the first veteran boat, the 12 ton Bermudian ketch Lola, built by Kings of Burnham in 1925 to a design by J. Pain Clark. She was followed by another five Bermudian jobs, including a couple of the pretty little Gareloch One Designs, then came the first gaffer. But what was this? Not the slippery Thistle who had led the fleet for so much of the way, but R.A. McGrouther's Clyde 17/19 Hatasoo, who had somehow managed to slip ahead of Thistle to claim first prize on both elapsed and corrected time - a very rare feat in handicap races. Thistle was the second gaffer over, then came the second oldest boat in the Race, Norman Sutherland's Ayrshire Lass - a beautiful Fife design built at Fairlie in 1887. Ayrshire Lass was at one time the first Bermudian rigged boat on the Clyde, but fortunately she was later restored to her designed rig, albeit with somewhat smaller sail area.

Next came Hugh Simpson's Shireen, which will be familiar to readers of Ann Davidson's books as the boat which caused them so many problems when they used her on Loch Lomond during the war years. Designed by A. Milne, and built by McGruer in 1900, Shireen was one of the finest of the Clyde 19/24s, and as Hugh Simpson demonstrated, she is still a capable prize winner.

The rest of the finish was much as expected - a reasonable mix of gaffers and Bermudian boats, with the three big two-masted gaffers Nordfjord, Miranda and Soldian bringing up the rear, with Vegan still as tail-end-Charlie. The only drop-out from the gaff fleet was the 1964 built Loch Fyne Skiff Rose of Argyll.

As students of Sod's Law might well imagine, no sooner had the decision to finish the race at Warden Bank been taken and the first few boats timed in, than the light breeze hardened very slightly, just enough to keep most of the fleet moving nicely, and even enough to cause some of the boats to heel over very slightly! Actually, it seems quite possible that this increase in wind could have been the fleet moving into an area where there had been just slightly more wind all day, rather than any change in the weather conditions.

Most boats kept on sailing after the finish of the actual race (it seems that quite a number were not aware that the course had been shortened, despite the flying of many flags, firing of guns and other loud noises aboard Suzy Wong) and Capt. Mike Henry aboard the large catamaran Swan anchored at Colintrave kept a record of the finishing times there. Quite surprisingly, considering the different wind conditions for the two parts of the total course, the results based on the Colintrave timings turned out to be remarkably similar to those taken at Warden Bank. Hatasoo was still an easy first on corrected time, although Thistle and Shireen overtook her on the way. No time at Colintrave was available for Ayrshire Lass, but she could safely be assumed to have performed consistently over the second part of the course, and if it is assumed that she would have ended up fifth or sixth, then no boat would have gained or lost more than one place had the race proper been continued.

The remainder of the proceedings were somewhat blurred by the prodigious quantities of alcohol which seem to form an essential part of all O.G.A. functions. Mine hosts Ken and Helen Sykora at the Colintrave Hotel coped with an overwhelming number of thirsty mariners; Mrs. Henry presented the prizes; the new cups were properly christened; and somehow or other it seemed that everybody found a berth for the night.

Whilst the two fleets of Gaffers and Bermudian classes started and raced together, the fleets were on quite different handicapping systems, and the results for the two classes can not be compared directly. Unfortunately, full dimensions are available only for Vegan, so it is not possible to establish 'unadjusted' corrected times for any of the Bermudian boats. However, if Lola's sail area is assumed to be 600 square feet (and that is a very low sail area for a 39 foot boat), she would have been placed between Ayrshire Lass and Camilla on corrected time at Warden Bank.

As good racing the first Clyde Race might have fallen somewhat short of the organisers' hopes, but as a pleasant waterborne weekend it must rate very highly indeed. A superlative collection of some of the most beautiful yachts ever built, sailing gently past the almost unbelievable beauty of the Scottish mountains - what finer sight COULD there be? To which the only possible answer is 'even more gaffers in next year's race'.

Whilst most of the credit for this highly successful weekend must go to Sam Poole, the efforts of Mike Henry, Mike Winter, Joe Lake, and far from least, Leading Seaman Moss, who coped admirably with the nearly worn-out controls on the quarter-of-a-century-old Committee boat Suzy Wong, must not go unrecorded.

ORDER OF START

|       |                      |   |        |                    |    |
|-------|----------------------|---|--------|--------------------|----|
|       | Lenore               | 1 |        | (Luna)             |    |
|       | Thistle              | 2 |        | Rose of Argyll     | 9  |
|       | (Catriona)           |   | 20 min | Hildasay 2nd Round | 10 |
|       | (Cara)               |   |        | Molly              | 11 |
|       | Nordfjord On line    |   |        | (Elrituna)         |    |
|       | Hildasay fouled S.W. |   |        | (Torridon)         |    |
|       | Taygetta             | 3 |        | (Circe)            |    |
|       | (Lola)               |   |        | Wender             | 12 |
|       | (Idaho)              |   |        | (Dione)            |    |
|       | Ayrshire Lass        | 4 |        | (Juno)             |    |
|       | Camilla              | 5 |        | Moyra              | 13 |
| 8 min | Nordfjord Over       | 6 |        | Puffin             | 14 |
|       | (Judith)             |   |        | (Trio)             |    |
|       | (Nysa)               |   |        | Beroe              | 15 |
|       | Shireen              | 7 | 40 min | Soldian            | 16 |
|       | Hatasoo              | 8 |        | Miranda            | 17 |
|       | (Galatea)            |   | 48 min | (Vegan)            |    |

FINISH AT WARDEN BANK

| FINAL<br>POSN. |               | CORR.<br>TIME | POSN.<br>OVER<br>LINE | FIN.<br>TIME | POSN.@<br>COLIN-<br>TRAIVE |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| 1              | Hatasoo       | 4 12 13       | 1                     | 15 06 16     | 1                          |
| 2              | Shireen       | 4 23 20       | 4                     | 15 11 18     | 2                          |
| 3              | Lenore        | 4 25 40       | 10                    | 15 38 48     | 4                          |
| 4              | Thistle       | 4 28 26       | 2                     | 15 08 23     | 3                          |
| 5              | Hildasay      | 4 30 04       | 5                     | 15 20 25     | 5                          |
| 6              | Ayrshire Lass | 4 36 09       | 3                     | 15 10 10     | ?                          |
| 7              | Camilla       | 4 49 08       | 8                     | 15 37 04     | 8                          |
| 8              | Taygetta      | 4 49 53       | 12                    | 15 39 25     | 7                          |
| 9              | Puffin        | 5 01 24       | 9                     | 15 38 19     | 10                         |
| 10             | Moyra         | 5 03 08       | 6                     | 15 35 58     | 9                          |
| 11             | Beroe         | 5 20 47       | 11                    | 15 39 01     | 12                         |
| 12             | Wender        | 5 31 15       | 13                    | 16 04 46     | 11                         |
| 13             | Molly         | 5 34 56       | 7                     | 15 36 46     | 13                         |
| 14             | Miranda       | 5 39 47       | 15                    | 16 17 19     | -                          |
| 15             | Nordfjord     | 5 48 15       | 14                    | 16 09 01     | -                          |
| 16             | Soldian       | 6 08 03       | 16                    | 16 18 03     | -                          |

Retired: ROSE OF ARGYLL

FOR SALE

SWEETHEART Ramsgate Smack, 33' L.O.A., 15' bowsprit. Built Ramsgate 1896, probably for whelk fishing. Not at present gaff rigged, but does have gaff sail and suitable spar. 5 berths. Calor gas cooker, fitted sink & sea toilet. Stuart Turner 8 h.p., recently rebuilt. Full inventory of sails, warps & rigging. Because in need of some repairs to planking, offered at £995. May be seen afloat at Ramsgate by arrangement. Mrs. M. Marchal, 206 Duncan House, Dolphin Square, London S.W.1.

BOOK REVIEW

CLINKER BOATBUILDING by John Leather,  
published by Adlard Coles at £3.25.

This is an ordinary sized book, and at first glance one can justifiably expect to find the average amount of information one can get from a technical book of 208 pages. But on starting to read it, one gets quite a surprise. The print is a trifle finer than is customary in books of this kind, so even with an average author the book could convey more than usual - but John Leather is no average author.

As John says in the introduction 'This book is a practical handbook'. Even that simple statement uses the value of the words to the full. It is one of the most practical books it has ever been my pleasure to read, and it is truly of handbook size - a book which will live as well on the workshop bench as the lounge book-case. Right from page 1 no words are wasted. John has set out to write about clinker boatbuilding, and that he does, without wasting words on any extraneous subjects at all. If you don't know anything about woodworking tools, then John has assumed you will find out elsewhere. In the first four pages all the tools required for the job are dealt with, and almost a quarter of that space goes on battens. Then follows less than two pages on building premises, and by page 6 we are reading about building stocks.

What I find so amazing about this book is that other books would spend a chapter or two on tools and building premises, and yet in just 6 pages this book covers the subject - and seems to cover it better than any other book on the subject I've ever read!

Certainly John assumes some intelligence and knowledge on the part of his readers. I would think though that an intelligent reader who knew nothing whatsoever about boats would end up very knowledgeable indeed if he just studied this one book carefully. No words are wasted explaining why a boat has a keel (or stem, or transom) - straight in with hard, technical facts. The terseness of the style is admirably illustrated in the section on the fitting of stopwaters.

#### "STOPWATERS

Holes for the stopwaters should be bored through the line of scarp and on the plank line, in the rebate. The stopwaters are planed from softwood to a tight fit, one end pointed, and they are then driven. The excess wood is cut off."

Short - hard hitting - every single word doing a full job of work. And what else could one add to that?

Even more terse are the instructions for fitting the centre-plate case.

"The following sequence of fitting will ensure best results if the case is constructed as a, b, c, or d.

"Bottoms of case sides bedded and placed on hog. Wood screws through keel and hog driven from below into case bottom. To ensure accurate alignment of these fastenings it is best to drill holes for them downwards through the hog and keel before the case is fitted.

"Sills bedded down and screwed to sides.

"Sills nailed and clenched to keel."

The Leather touch of dry humour is not lacking, although never does it obtrude into the communication of valuable information. Never before have I seen an author put the two main reasons for being careful with a drawknife as John has put them:

"A drawknife must always be used with care so that it does not suddenly split through the wood and into the worker's legs or body; also so it does not go too deeply into the wood".

Presumably, the other books I have read were written with the paid employee in mind, where the yard manager was possibly more worried about damage to a client's valuable mast than he was about damage to a mere employee! For the amateur John has certainly got the priorities right.

The book does not cover only clinker building - there is a chapter on cold moulded construction as well.

Appendix 2 gives the properties of some woods used in clinker boatbuilding. From Acacia and Apple through to Yacal, with the longest sections on English oak and Iroko, this is a most valuable list. Probably even more valuable is the list in Appendix 3 of useful suppliers, of which more are apparently found in America than in the U.K. It will not surprise those members who read Classic Boat Monthly to hear that A. Dauphinee & Sons Ltd. are included in this list.

I have deliberately saved until last what I found the best feature of this superlative book - the illustrations. 97 line drawings, each with a real purpose, and twelve photographs. Those who have read "Gaff Rig" will know the care John puts into his drawings, and, if it were possible, I would suggest that the drawings in this book are even better than those in "Gaff Rig"! The captions are all admirably terse - but always fully adequate. The twelve photographs are all of small dinghies under construction in the Nottage Institute at Wivenhoe, and they could almost form a mini-book on clinker boatbuilding on their own!

The publisher's blurb on the dust jacket informs the reader that "the art of clinker boatbuilding is being revived by amateur and professional builders all over the world". I feel it is a pity that John Leather's part in this revival is not stressed more. John has done a vast amount of hard work towards the revival of clinker construction, both at the Nottage Institute and in his design work. With this book, I hope we shall now see an even greater interest in real, seamanlike small boats.

In conclusion, I very much doubt whether any member of the O.G.A. - even including those who have built their own boats - will be able to read this book without adding significantly to their knowledge of small boat construction. Certainly I would unhesitatingly rate this as the finest book on boatbuilding I have ever read - I wish John had published it before I built my boat!

J.A.S.

#### FOR SALE

BANDERA Ex-Blackwater Sloop, 18'6" waterline, 2 berths.  
Seagull. Terylene mainsail, 2 foresails. Good condition,  
recently fitted out. Lying St. Osyth Boatyard. £350 o.n.o.  
Peter Renshaw, 14 Brendon Ave., London N.W.10. 01-450-4486.