OLD GAFFERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER 1971/4

First, a welcome to the following new members:

H.F. Aitken, 2 Shipps Cottages, Wheatsheaf Lane, Wrabness, Manningtree, Essex. Lufra
M.C. Beggs, 31 Branders Lane, Bournemouth, BH6 4LL, Hants. Maid Marion of Itchenor
L. Bowen, Tides Reach, Ferry Road, Hayling Island, Hants. Seaway.
M. Challis, Yt. Ferryman, c/o Moody's Boatyard, Swanwick, Hants. Ferryman
P. Dupre, Croft Cottage, Eastergate Lane, Eastergate, Chichester, Sussex. Westward
I. Greenhill, Woodland Cottage, Farm Lane, Ashtead, Surrey. Tiny Clanger
N.R. Knight, 35 Brighton Ave., Gosport, Hants.

I.A. McIntyre, Broome Cottage, Rushmoor, Tilford, Surrey. Dawn
S.G.K. Melrose, The Lady Belle, Crableck Yard, Sarisbury Green, Southampton, Hants. Lady Belle
J.W.B. Porter, 24 Sherwood, Herne Rd., Surbiton, Surrey. Sanderling
C. Scoones, 60 Grosvenor Rd., Wanstead, London, E.11. Swan
A.K. Scott, 2 Emerson Court, Wimbledon Hill Rd., London S.W.19. Senechal
L.A. Vincett, Red Lion, Tolleshunt D'Arcy, Essex. Star
C.S.W. Ward, 12 Bath Rd., Emsworth, Hants. Marian
B.J. Westwood, Crown House, Old Portchester, Fareham, Hants. Moya

DIARY DATES

Sat. 9th October Rally at Cowes Corinthian Yacht Club. Michael Millar must have orders for supper by Thursday 7th Oct. at latest.

Sat. 13th November Usual open evening at Maldon Little Ship Club. Buffet 30p. No need to book - just roll up!

Fri. 26th November Solent Area A.G.M. will be at the Emsworth Slipper Sailing Club. Bar open from 7 p.m. Business Meeting (which will be kept as short as possible) from 8 p.m. Usual soup and bangers will be available. Will members having any matter of substance to raise please notify Michael Millar in advance. As it is not easy to rig projectors in this Club, it is proposed to keep the showing of slides and films until the Social Evening at the Hardway Sailing Club in the New Year.

Sat. 15th January, 1972 A.G.M. at Cruising Association Rooms, Baker Street, W.1. 6 p.m. onwards - more social than business - light snacks and bar.

Sat. 22nd July, 1972 East Coast Race. Please make sure to come along and give us a record entry.

MICHAEL MILLAR wishes to thank the many members who have written to him, either by letter or by notes on their race entry forms, offering sympathy over the loss of Quiver; he apologises to any to whom he has failed to reply, but pleads pressure of work in getting the Solent Race under way. He is also very grateful to those who intend to sell their own boats and have given him first refusal on favourable terms; these gestures are very much appreciated: again, apologies are offered to any which have not been followed up, in this case because the boat was not quite what was wanted.

RALLY AT GIN'S FARM: Saturday 14th August. After a fair morning, the wind freshened very considerably in the afternoon, causing several boats which had set forth to seek shelter in Cowes, while one was blown ashore at the mouth of Beaulieu River. However, many of the crews who could not make it by water, came overland, and we finished up with over fifty at the party, representing eighteen boats, of which half were present in the river. After the usual excellent supper laid on by the Royal Southampton Yacht Club, the bar continued to do good business until closing time. Thereafter, a ridiculous number of members were squeezed into 'Kathleen's' somewhat limited accommodation, where music (?) was made and duty-frees consumed until the small hours. Next morning, the wind had blown itself out, and the dispersal was on a quieter note.

ISLAND MEMBERS' LUNCH PARTY Sunday August 29th saw a new O.G.A. venture when members and their families from all over the Isle of Wight, and the Hon. Secretary and family who were at Shanklin on holiday, converged on Cowes for lunch at the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club. The gathering had been organised by Frank Parsons (of Mina), and it was generally agreed that it was a most successful party, and should be repeated in future years. The weather was not over pleasant, dull and drizzle, and after a few minutes watching the power boats tearing past in clouds of spray, those present were glad to turn to the bar and talk of more interesting boats.

EDGAR J. MARCH, M.I.N.R.

It had been hoped that the well known author Edgar J. March would be able to join our lunch party at Cowes, but unfortunately he died suddenly and peacefully at his home at Colwell Bay a few weeks earlier. Mr. March was an authority on boats from the smallest inshore fishing craft to the largest liners and warships. His four volumes 'Sailing Trawlers', 'Sailing Drifters', and 'Inshore Craft of Britain in the days of oar and sail' (2 vols.) must form the backbone of any reference library on gaff rigged boats, and his other works on barges and destroyers are also truly great classics. Edgar March was a modest retiring gentleman who seemed remarkably young for his age, and it was only when he spoke of his personal experiences of bygone boats that one realised he was no longer a young man. His unexpected death leaves a great gap in the ranks of the marine historians.

1971 SOLENT AREA RACE

Sometimes I wonder just when the O.G.A. and its events will cease to grow. It is not long since we kept our fingers crossed and wondered whether we might one day see 50 entries in the East Coast Race - and this year the Solent Race gets 63 entries! About a half-mile length of boats all told (1,940 feet, plus bowsprits!). Of these, a record total of 56 were seen to start (or were identified just after the start), and a record of 44 were timed in.

It was a glorious day - for doing most things other than yacht racing! The wind was never strong, and often it was conspicuous by its absence with the result that the real winner of the day was the tide! Before getting on with any account of

the race, I must once again say some nasty words. Identification. Names of boats. Why, oh why are some of you so ashamed of your craft that if there is any name on it, it is in microscopic letters on the transom? I enjoyed sitting on the balcony of the Globe Hotel on the Friday evening watching gaffer after gaffer come in, but being quite unable to identify a good third of them rather spoilt the fun. Thank goodness most of you did at least show a race number on the Saturday. Don't forget that the Committee have the right (really the duty!) to disqualify any boat not displaying its name or registered fishing number permanently and legibly at a reasonable distance. On the other hand, there are those who really do care - sail number, name in large, bold letters on the hull, clearly painted race numbers, and a gay hoist of signal flags. Thank you gentlemen - you're proud of your boats and we're proud of you as members. And lest East Coast members think I'm getting at the naughty boys on the Solent, let me hasten to add that identification in the Solent Race was easier than on the East Coast, despite the sun shining almost straight into our eyes!

The course set was roughly a long diamond - East Lepe, Truck, East Bramble, Mother Bank and home. The start was the best yet in any of the recent races. Five or six boats were over the line when the gun went, but a vast number of boats crossed correctly within seconds of the gun. Frank Parsons had Mina absolutely perfectly placed to make a text-book start, with Skipjack hard on her heels, then came Theodora, then a mass of overlapping boats, of which some twenty were not identified as to the order in which they crossed. The second half of the fleet was a bit more spread out, and it was possible to record the order of the last fifteen or so boats. The last few boats were most of the really 'big boys' - Provident, Citara, Reymerswale, Regard and Njordskag. Njordskag had crossed from below the line, and looked for some time as if she should beat Regard over the line, but there was insufficient wind for her to come about to start!

The tide and the very light wind carried the fleet down to East Lepe, and there the race virtually stopped for a long lunch break, and many boats anchored. Some boats managed to work their way over to the North shore and fought their way to the East against the tide, with J. McKillop's Tern in the lead, but it was painfully slow progress. As the calm afternoon wore on, it was obvious that only the turn of the tide would get the fleet over to Mother Bank, and then they would have to wait for a fair tide back to Cowes, so the Elder Gaffer took Maresca out to contact John Player's steam pinnace Nottingham Castle (acting as Guard Ship for the race) to ask them to come back to Cowes and take the committee down to East Bramble to finish there.

Tern held on to her lead for the whole afternoon, but a light westerly breeze and the turn of the tide brought the rest of the fleet up to her, and reduced what had been a very substantial lead in time to a mere couple of minutes at the line. David Ettling's Paguera followed Tern in, then came Stan Woods' Sea Breeze. Mike Richardson managed to cross fourth with Betty, but he was only seconds ahead of Foam, Gaivotta, Ripple and Sybil of Wivenhoe.

It was almost a repeat of the finish of the East Coast Race - conditions pushed the tail of the fleet up to the leaders so there was only about an hour's spread in finishing times, and the results on corrected times bore a strong resemblance to a list on ascending order of T(H)CFs!

If such a list is taken as a guide, it can be seen that Paguera, Dancing Wave, Sea Breeze, Storm, Betty, Skipjack and Tern all did very much better than could have been expected, and in the bigger boats Gaivotta, Sybil of Wivenhoe, Velsia and Melmore did very well.

It was interesting to note the sails being set - wonderful combinations of headsails, and many boats using water-sails, with some set below large headsails as well as under the main booms.

RESULTS OF THE 1971 SOLENT OLD GAFFERS RACE

FINAL POSN.		CORR. TIME	POSN. OVER LINE	(Start 10 30 00) FIN. TIME	CLASS
1	Ripple	5 19 13	7	16 47 46	2o
2	Rosabel	5 23 53	10	16 49 15	2
3	Ferryman	5 25 21	13	16 55 57	2
4	Iseult	5 30 10	12	16 55 42	2
5	Viking	5 30 24	19	17 06 38	2o
6	Sea Breeze	5 39 19	3	16 45 46	2o
7	Paguera	5 44 03	2	16 43 34	2
8	Storm	5 44 37	9	16 48 42	2o
9	Betty	5 47 14	4	16 47 26	2o
10	Brown Owl	5 47 50	29	17 16 49	2o
11	Dancing Wave	5 48 08	42	17 43 32	2
12	Mary Niven	5 49 09	31	17 20 50	2
13	Skipjack	5 53 06	11	16 51 44	2o
14	Piskie	5 53 08	17	17 02 22	2o
15	Patsy	5 54 32	18	17 05 15	2o
16	Norwic	5 55 32	20	17 07 15	2
17	Marishka	5 59 31	21	17 07 22	2o
18	Firefly	6 01 10	23	17 13 05	2o
19	Tern	6 01 58	1	16 41 15	2
20	Lady Olive	6 02 51	27	17 14 04	2
21	Katrign	6 08 12	43	17 45 44	2
22	Mina	6 12 15	24	17 13 45	2
23	Morning Star	6 13 21	32	17 23 27	2o
24	Foam	6 14 08	5	16 47 32	2o
25	Sea Fever	6 14 09	34	17 25 43	2o
26	Mandy	6 18 33	39	17 35 20	2o
27	Velsia	6 19 54	16	16 57 45	1o
28	Dusky Maid	6 25 34	40	17 38 53	2o
29	Sybil of Wivenhoe	6 29 49	8	16 48 28	1o
30	Saari	6 31 28	30	17 17 21	1
31	Gaivotta	6 32 20	6	16 47 36	1
32	Sombria	6 35 06	36	17 30 56	1o
33	Dreva	6 39 21	28	17 14 18	1
34	Melmore	6 40 55	15	16 57 22	1
35	Richard Davey	6 42 34	25	17 13 47	1o
36	Fiona	6 43 34	22	17 07 59	1o
37	Golden Vanity	6 50 16	26	17 13 48	1o
38	Romilda	6 55 03	37	17 30 57	1o
39	Reymerswale	6 59 12	14	16 57 17	1
40	Equinoxe	7 42 24	35	17 26 35	1
41	Regard	8 01 42	33	17 24 33	1
42	Theodora	8 11 23	38	17 31 04	1o
43	Bries	8 30 57	44	17 47 50	1o
44	Provident	8 57 30	41	17 40 00 1	1

RETIRED AND NON-STARTERS: Cutlass, Cynara, Dabchick, Sarah Two, Seaway, Tango, Citara, Kirsty, Falcon of Fishbourne, Madcap, Njordskag, Bird of Dawning, Olive Mary, Scamp, Spray, Dawn, Lapwing, Mistral, Sanderling.

(continued from p. 3)
A few years ago such displays of sails were seldom seen, and in fact topsails were not all that common, but now we are seeing some really beautiful spreads of sail.

A very pleasant day afloat was rounded off by the party, and dinner at the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club. After dinner, Mrs. Richardson presented the prizes.

PRIZE WINNERS

The Dead-eye Trophy	Tern
The Channel Cup	Ripple
The Le Havre Plate	Velsia
The Emsworth Cleat	Viking
The Channel Plate	Rosabel
The Anchor Trophy	Regard
The Laggards Ladle	Bries
The C.H. Paxton Memorial Trophy	Richard Davey

Class One

2nd	Sybil of Wivenhoe
3rd	Saari
4th	Gaivotta

Class Two (Over fifty years old)

2nd	Sea Breeze
3rd	Storm
4th	Betty

Class Two (Under fifty years old)

2nd	Ferryman
3rd	Iseult
4th	Paguera

EAST COAST RALLY AT BRADWELL QUAY YACHT CLUB, September 25th

This first real rally on the East Coast was a great success. Eight boats sailed round to Bradwell, and other crews came by road, so the cosy clubroom of the Bradwell Quay Yacht Club was pleasantly crowded. Very welcome visitors were W. Lofvers and crew, who had sailed over from Sneek in Holland for the rally.

Good food, good drink, and pleasant company made a firm foundation for the evening, and slides of this year's East Coast Race, Mystic Seaport Museum in the U.S.A., and other miscellaneous gaff rigged boats provided some interest. Various bottles and a cake were raffled in aid of the R.N.L.I., and the evening ended with an international sing-song as M. Lofvers had thoughtfully brought his accordian along with him. Much of the success of the evening was due to Anthea Phelps, who organised the rally and looked after the catering.

To: M.D. Millar, 107 Baker Street, London W1M 1FE.

I hope to attend the Solent Area A.G.M. and Social Evening at the Emsworth Slipper Sailing Club on Friday 26th November.

Please ask Fred to allow Soup and Bangers for_____bodies.

NAME ..... BOAT .....

ADDRESS ..... TEL. NO. .....

.....

ADVERTISEMENTS

NIGHTFALL 31 ft. gaff sloop, 5 berths, full headroom through main saloon. Air cooled Lister diesel, 1968. New stern tube & gear. Terylene sails with roller reefing. Once owned & written about by Maurice Griffiths. Sale due to syndicate disbandment. Reasonable price to right person. Phone Southend-on-Sea 526056, or Bushey 4608. *

SWAN Barge yacht built 1897, all mahogany 26' x 8', inboard leeboards. All cotton sails include new mainsail, tan, 1971, new reaching jib, white, and rolling staysail. 3 berths, full cruising inventory, inc. Seagull Century, 2 fisherman anchors, 18 fathoms chain, galley, charcoal stove. New 8' dinghy with lugsail. At one time owned by Maurice Griffiths. 2 wins this season. Lying Benfleet Y.C. £600.
Scoones, 60 Grosvenor Road, Wanstead, London E 11.

CLYTHIE Gaff cutter, 34' x 28' x 9' x 3.7'. Built 1913 , by Robertson of Woodbridge. 2/3 berths. Flax mainsail, Terylene jib, cotton foresail. Morris Vedette 4 cyl. 12 b.h.p. petrol. 1st Class 1 in 1966 O.G. race. Lying Maldon. £500.
Dixon, Kerly Ltd., Downs Road, Maldon. Tel: Maldon 3330, 3425.

SHIKARI 6 meter gaff cutter. 30' x 24' x 6' x 5.5'. Built 1909, Hardwick of Hampton Wick, des. Linton Hope. 2 berths. Completely stripped out and partially rebuilt. Iroko shelves, beams. Laid swept decks in Western Cedar. Coamings etc. Iroko. Polyurethane & nylon sheathed. Fast, kindly, seaboat. £850.
Dixon, Kerly Ltd., Downs Road, Maldon, Tel: Maldon 3330, 3425.

FOR SALE - Cotton gaff main sail. Foot 13' 8", luff 12' gaff 8' 6", £12.

Port/Starboard paraffin nav. lights £5 pair.
Gas stove, 2 rings & grill £3.50. Wykeham Martin roller gear No. 32 £3.
Ling, 13 Mill Road, Tillingham, Essex. Tel: 435.

WANTED Old gaffer 50' - 90' range. Built 1870 - 1935 in England, Must be suitable condition for extended world cruising. Ideally trading schooner. Price according to condition. Cash available for right boat.
Robin Cecil-Wright, The Old Cottage, Hermitage Lane, Dettling, Kent.
Phone: 01-240-0166 (Office) Maidstone 37411 (Home)

*NIGHTFALL There is a chance that Mr. Braithwaite might consider renewing the syndicate if the right type of person with the right money is interested. The syndicate has always been properly organised on a thoroughly businnesslike basis, and can offer the advantages of ownership to persons without the time or money available for sole ownership.

EAST COAST RACE PHOTOGRAPHS Colour prints of the East Coast Race can be obtained from R. Stratton, Studio One, High Street, Maldon. Many of the photographs are of groups of boats, but the following can be clearly identified: Mary, Jubilee, CK 46, Eve, Para Handy, Jenny, Vivida, Fanny, CK 174, Vabel, Emma Jane, MN 21, Mary of Maldon, CK 82, Vivette, Dilkusha.

Old Gaffers (and others) in America

My trip to the U.S.A. all came about originally because I didn't think my employers would send me to the International electronic packaging conference at Brighton in 1970. As I was very keen to attend the conference, I decided to try and submit a paper myself. Somewhat to my surprise, it was accepted; even more to my surprise, it was voted to be the best European paper of the conference, and the American organisers invited me to give the paper again in New York at their expenses - air fare over and enough money for 3 days in New York. Naturally, I decided to extend the time in New York slightly and do some sightseeing, and Marconis agreed I might as well spend a week visiting American electronics companies at their expense whilst I was over there.

O.G.A. member John Leavens was a tremendous help in planning the trip, and invited me to spend a weeks holiday with him whilst I was over. Then when I mentioned the trip in one of the Newsletters, our member in Los Angeles, Eric Julber, invited me to fly over to Los Angeles and spend a week-end with him. I had to explain that I could not afford that, but when he extended the invitation to cover a couple of weeks, with a sightseeing tour of Yosemite National Park included, I decided that would be really worth the time and money. When they heard I would be paying my own fare to California, Marconis decided there were some companies there I ought to visit as well, so the whole trip built up to just over six weeks.

My first surprise came when I visited the B.O.A.C. office in London to see about buying a ticket. They didn't really want to know, and were distinctly unhelpful. I tried the firm's travel agents on North Audley Street, who offered me an 'all-in' ticket at £312. I thought this was rather expensive, so I tried some other airlines, and found T.W.A. were all keen and eager to have my custom, so I ended up buying my ticket from them - for just under £200.

I set out on Wednesday, May 26th, and the trip started quite dramatically. Ten minutes before our 747 was due to take off, they sent us all back to the departure lounge because somebody had rung them up to tell them there was a bomb on the aeroplane ! We had to wait an hour and a half whilst security and maintenance men searched the 'plane, and we all had to identify our luggage. I didn't have to open my case, but I think some of the others did. I wondered what the searchers would have made of four packets of Maldon Crystal Salt and salt grinders if they had opened my case !

So far as I was concerned, the free drinks T.W.A. supplied once we were airborne more than compensated for the delay, and I quite enjoyed my first flight on a Jumbo jet - a very civilised way of travelling, especially if the thing is less than half full ! I had a seat next to one of the galleys, and the American air hostesses were far more friendly than their British counterparts, and tea, coffee, or cold drinks could be had anytime. Because of the time shift, we had two lunches during the flight. There was little to see on the way, even when we were flying over land. After our take off from Heath Row, I was horrified to realise just how smoggy the atmosphere was - from the ground it looked a nice clear day, but from above the ground was barely visible through a pall of grey haze. On the American side of the Atlantic it was cloudy, and we could not see much of the land until we came in low over Long Island, then our speed made it hard to really appreciate the scenery - which was mainly water anyway !

My first stop in the U.S.A. was at Cold Spring Harbour, a small village on an inlet on the North shore of Long Island. I took the airport limousine from Kennedy Airfield - a somewhat battered 7 seater estate wagon, but surprisingly cheap for quite a long ride. The countryside was quite similar to England,

flattish, heavily wooded, with most of the houses hidden by trees. The most noticeable differences were that most of the houses were wooden, and the traffic jams were on the other sides of the roads ! My accommodation was booked at the Anchorage Motel - a smallish room in a single story block built round two sides of a courtyard, with the office and breakfast room in a severe looking 3 story brick building. As no dinner was available at the motel, I went to a somewhat ramshackle looking wooden built diner across the road, where I had a shrimp dinner which cost six dollars - but the shrimps were enormous and delicious. Although I felt very tired by then, it was still light, so I decided to have a short walk before going to bed. Alook at the small old motor boats which lay along the side of the inlet sufficed to show that there was little of real interest, so I strolled down the main street, away from the waterside. What started as a short stroll ended up as a very merry evening out, as by a chain of devious circumstances, I spent the evening with the senior electronics engineer from Grumman Aircraft and his wife ! A most enjoyable evening and a very nice start to my visit to America.

Next morning it was really brought home to me that I was in another country when all the guests in the breakfast room said 'Good Morning' and started talking ! I had a day's work at Glen Cove a few miles along on Long Island, then in the evening I took the Long Island Rail Road into New York City, wlked along the subway from Penn Central Station to Greeley Square P.A.T.H. subway station, the subway train to Hoboken station, then a 50 years old electric train on the Eerie Lackawanna Rail Road out to Summit in New Jersey. I'd gone right across lower Manhattan underground, and not had a single glimpse of a skyscraper ! I thought the area between Hoboken and Newark a dreadful place - acres of apparently abandonned industrial wasteland. (But on my last trip into London, I had a closer look at the area round Stratford - our industrial ruins are just about as bad !)

At Summit station, John Leavens met me with his 1951 Rolls Royce saloon, and we drove the short distance to his very nice large bungalow on a pleasant wooded slope. John is Secretary of the American Cat Boat Association - an organisation which is very similar to the O.G.A. in many respects, and in his basement at Summit he has a nice collection of half models of cat boats. He also has a very comprehensive collection of decoy ducks. Most of the evening was taken up with packing John's Chevrolet estate wagon, eating the magnificent meal Mrs. Leavens had got for us, and talking. It was a very short evening (which suited me because it took the best part of a week to get over the 5 hour time shift - I kept on waking up at 2 in the morning) and we were up at dawn on the Friday, and off on our way to Martha's Vineyard after a quick breakfast.

I was very surprised at the low speed limits along the broad toll road we took along the Connecticut shoreline (55, 60, or 65), but the traffic rolled along steadily, giving a very high average speed for the journey. We paused briefly to look at the masts of the boats in Mystic Seaport Museum, and had a glimpse of the U.S.S. Massachusetts at Fall River. At the submarine base at New London we saw a nuclear submarine coming in to dock beside the mother ship. We made one stop for a snack and a cup of coffee at a Howard Johnson Motel, and at 11.30 we arrived at Woods Hole, in nice time for the mid day ferry over to the Island. For most of the run, the scenery had been woodland, with some points of interest in the larger towns. There was just nice time to have a quick look round and take a couple of photographs, then the car ferry Islander docked and we drove on for the passage over to Martha's Vineyard. It didn't look all that pleasant a sailing area off Woods Hole, as there were some quite nasty tide swirls round some of the buoys, but the town itself looked very attractive, with pleasant wooden houses half hidden by the trees which covered the gentle slope up from the harbour.

As we entered Vineyard Haven harbour, the most conspicuous features were the two masted topsail schooner Shenandoah and a large Gloucester fishing schooner, both riding to moorings. Many smaller boats were moored in the sheltered harbour, which was surrounded by boatyards and nicely painted wooden houses. Vineyard Haven is a very pleasant town, and the whole atmosphere was relaxed and in holiday mood - an atmosphere accentuated by the Memorial Day Parade we saw on Main Street. After a bit of shopping, we drove through young woodland scenery to the western end of the island where John has a lovely wooden bungalow on the top of a knoll in 8 acres of semi-wild woodland above Menemsha, with wonderful views to the South and West from the lounge windows.

During the next five days we had a sail across to Falmouth and round Oak Bluffs harbour in John's 22ft. Catboat Pinkletink, and visited Edgartown and Oak Bluffs by car - both charming towns of old style wooden houses and trees. Edgartown has a delightful museum, with a fully equipped whale boat and the original Fresnel lense from the Gay Head light, and Oak Bluffs has an area of small, wonderfully decorated wooden houses all built on old tent sites in a Methodist camp ground. Le Brown, another Catboat owner, invited us to a cocktail party on Chappaquiddick Island, reached by a small ferry from Edgartown, and where we saw the bridge to the sand bar made famous by Senator Kennedy. One evening we enjoyed a dinner of lobsters bought live from a fishermans store at Menemsha, followed by blueberry pie; and one lunch time we ate herring scooped up from the herring fishery at Menemsha Pond that morning. On our way across the island to Edgartown we passed the house in which Capt. Joshua Slocum spent his last years. Wild life was abundant - one evening we saw deer crossing the road, and cotton-tail rabbits, blue jays, ducks and gulls were very much in evidence. The weather could have been better - we had rain on two days and quite a lot of low cloud, but we did see some hot sun.

John and his wife Pinkie were the perfect hosts for a wonderfully relaxing holiday, and all too soon it was Wednesday and I had to be on my way. John had to fly to New York, so Pinkie drove us first to the Airport, where John left on a small twin engined, fixed undercarriage aeroplane of New England Airlines, then into Vineyard Haven where we looked round a sailors chapel and whaling museum, and I transferred my luggage to Le Brown's jeep. By good luck, Le and his wife were planning to drive back to New York on the Wednesday, and they had offered to drop me off at Providence. We had a snack lunch on the ferry over to Woods Hole, then we drove off West, stopping for an ice cream at a Howard Johnson Motel, opposite which was a police station with a nice large lawn in front. The purpose of the lawn became apparent when a traffic control helicopter came in to land. We arrived in Providence mid-afternoon, and easily found Lea Williams lovely large wooden house on Transit Street, and I left Le Brown and his wife to continue their journey.

Lea Williams is yet another Catboat owner and O.G.A. member, and is also head of a department at Brown University. After a welcome cold drink we went out in Lea's Volkswagon to do a bit of shopping and to see something of Providence, which struck me as a very pleasant city indeed, with some nice modern buildings in the centre, but mainly graceful old wooden buildings very well kept indeed. My first evening with Lea was taken up by a small dinner party, for which Lea's wife Daisy had prepared a wonderful meal - as Daisy is very much a gourmet cook, the Maldon salt I had taken was very much appreciated. With excellent food and drink, and lively and intelligent conversation the evening was over all too soon. My stay at Providence included visits to Bristol, where we saw the Herreschoff estate (obviously some people have made money out of boats!) and the boatyard destroyed in a hurricane

6 or 7 years ago, and to East Greenwich, where we fitted out Lea's Catboat for a wonderful sail across the estuary to her mooring at Bristol.

Friday afternoon came far too quickly, and it was time to leave Providence - by train this time - the Penn Central Rail Road's 'Manhattan', an enormous and noisy diesel engine dragging four very large coaches (of which, needless to say, I travelled in the cheapest). I can't see why Americans complain about their railways - the coach was air conditioned, with very comfortable individual reclining seats, windows tinted to avoid glare, an enormous luggage rack on which my big case looked lost, and a coffee bar at the end of the car. With a bit of a polish it would have compared favourably with our first class Pullman. However, by British standards it was a slow train - which I found all to the good as it gave me a chance to enjoy the woodland scenery along the Rhode Island and Connecticut shorelines. The engine was hooting frequently for ungated crossings, and further interest was added to the journey by the many inlets and bays we passed, most of which contained marinas, boatyards, and many boats on moorings.

I left the train at New London, and telephoned my host for the next two days, Ned Watson, who said he'd be over to collect me by car. It was too hot to go out and explore New London, especially as there was nowhere I could leave my luggage, and the area round the station didn't look very inviting - somewhat grimy old brick buildings with a rather decayed air. Ned soon arrived, and we drove out to Mystic Seaport, where Ned is Dockmaster and chief of security. He is yet another Catboat owner, and serves as their Association's Corresponding Secretary. Ned and his wife Sally live in a 2 storey cedar shingled house just outside the Seaport Museum, and from the kitchen window, the masts of some of the boats could be seen through the trees.

There was just time for a refreshing shower, change into clean clothes, and a drink, and we were off to yet another party. I expected this one to be more sober and sedate, as it was a 60th birthday party for the Methodist Minister at Stonington. However, I got quite a surprise ! The party was held at the local yacht club, and was quite a big, grand affair. Three or four bar stewards were hard at work dispensing spirits in generous quantities, and the buffet of hot sea food cocktail followed by cold turkey and ham salad was a very satisfying meal - especially as second and third helpings were available ! I was already beginning to wonder whether my clothes would fit me at all by the time I left America, and the stitches on my older suit which I wore for travelling were beginning to give up the struggle !

We didn't stay too late at the party, but went back to Ned's to see some slides of the 1970 East Coast Old Gaffers Race, to look at Ned's photographs of a trip to Tahiti on a square rigger, and to talk - mainly about boats. Altogether a most enjoyable evening.

Most of the next two days was spent in the Seaport Museum (of which a description must wait till later), but I loved the lunch break. From about 11.30 Ned and Sally virtually held 'open house' for sailing friends, and it was delightful to come in out of the hot sun and enjoy a large Scotch on the rocks, crackers and cheese, and ham sandwiches, and to chat about boats - all so informal and relaxing. My two days at Mystic passed far too quickly - it was truly an enchanting place - and I was off again, this time by Greyhound Bus into New York City. More air conditioned comfort ! We entered New York via Harlem and Ninth Avenue, at about 5 p.m. on the Sunday, and I was not at all favourably impressed - it all looked grimy, run-down, and sadly in need of a spring-clean. Sundry street fights, and nasty looking characters sitting on steps drinking out of bottles did not help to improve the general impression ! Ninth Avenue was lined with shabby looking small shops etc., and the glimpses of the cross streets were not very encouraging. All in all, it was not a very impressive way in to one of the world's greatest cities !

The Greyound Bus ran into the Port Authority Terminal - a vast concrete building, somewhat gloomy, with vast ducts writhing their way under the ceilings. The waiting area and booking counters were very similar to an airport, and the whole place seemed quite efficient, but not very pleasant. I had to take a bus out to Somerville in New Jersey for the start of my weeks work, and once again we passed through the industrial wasteland around Newark, then out into what is probably just about America at its worst - mile after mile of small business premises with gaudy advertising signs, many of the places with a derelict air, and towns of mainly wooden houses which straggled their way through lightly wooded countryside. It was extremely hot and sticky, I was very tired, and I found the whole area quite depressing - at that time I did not realise that Plainsville had been the centre of some terrible race riots. But worse was to come. The bus dropped me at the Somerset Hotel - a very run down and seedy looking place, and I had to wait nearly half an hour before being able to share a taxi with five others - 2 of us sat with luggage piled over us and our feet in water which slopped about over the v floor - the driver had recently washed the car out ! Luckily it was not far to my Motel. The Motel looked quite nice - all chromium plate, formica and plastic furniture, but the appearances were deceptive. The plumbing worked sometimes, and the television didn't (not that that was any loss!). Also the only food available was at a diner on the far side of an eight lane highway. Luckily, American drivers have far better manners than British, so I didn't starve - I got a dreadful chicken salad which made me quite ill - it was the following Thursday before I was able to enjoy a good meal !

A thoroughly depressing evening was nicely rounded off by a torrential thunderstorm. The air conditioning in the motel room worked very well indeed, but it was about as quiet as Concorde, so I spent the night kept awake alternately by the whine of the air conditioning or by the rapid rise in temperature and humidity every time I switched the noisy contraption off !

The following week was taken up with visits to electronics companies - R.C.A. at Somerville on the Monday, then bus back to Newark and a flight to Binghamton in upper New York State, in a twin engined, high wing aeroplane of Mohawk Airlines. About half way along the flight we ran into thunder storms - some really spectacular cloud effects in black, yellow and purple, but not very nice as they threw us about quite a bit ! Binghamton seemed a pleasant place, set in a broad wooded valley with nicely rounded hills forming the horizon, but I didn't see much of it as I took the airport limousine - a 12 seater Pontiac - just like an ordinary estate wagon with 2 extra back seats and doors ! We went about 20 miles up the valley to Owego, where I found myself booked in at a very much nicer Motel - one of the Treadway chain. The dinner menu was a gourmet's delight, and I was on the firm's expenses - but all I could manage was a small plain steak ! Tragedy ! A day with I.B.M. at Owego, then back again to Newark, landing at White Plains on the way - more woodland and lakes visible as we came in to land.

Then from Newark a long bus ride to Allentown, Pennsylvania. For most of the way I was the only passenger, and I had a most interesting conversation with the driver as we sped along the highway, often running between two enormous trucks. These trucks, many of which towed trailers, were huge, and they ran at very high speeds indeed. Since buses are limited to the same sppeds as trucks (usually 5 M.P.H. less than the limit for cars) it took us a long time to overtake a truck and trailer. The second half of New Jersey beyond Somerville looked much nicer than the bit from Newark out, but it got dark before we reached Pennsylvania and the Lehigh Valley.

The Allentown Motor Hotel proved to be a pleasant modern eight storey building near the town centre, and although the dining room officially closed at ten, I was able to get a large bowl of thick soup (nearer to a dilute stew, really !) and a cup of coffee before setting out to have a brief look at the town. Wednesday (Western Electric in Allentown and at Murray Hill, N.J.) saw me back once again at Newark airport in the late afternoon - I was really getting to know that main lounge! This time it was to take the Eastern Airlines shuttle service to Boston - a D.C.9. The aeroplane was quite full, and I was too late to get a window seat. This didn't matter much because apart from a distant view of Manhattan as we turned after take-off there was far too much smog and haze about to see much through the breaks in the clouds.

From the airport I had an expensive taxi ride (with an out of work electronics engineer as driver) to the Hotel Continental in Cambridge - quite near Harvard College. Boston and Cambridge were disappointing - all rather seedy and run-down looking, with large numbers of hippies and other layabouts frequenting the parks, main squares, etc. The hotel had seen better days. Only one light bulb in my room worked and the place was clearly understaffed, even with the usual vacation students helping out. However, my four days in the area had some wonderful highlights. Thursday and Friday were spent visiting electronics firms - two each day, which made it rather hard going, and brought me into close contact with the local public transport systems - buses, trolleybuses, two different underground railway systems, both of which sometimes emerged above ground, and one of which ran delightful small cars like old style trams. Also the Boston and Maine Rail Road, now running multiple unit Budd diesel rail cars - very much in need of cleaning and some new glass in the double glazed windows, but quite efficient and surprisingly cheap.

Thursday I was invited to spend the evening and night with an ex-Marconi engineer who is now with Massachusetts Institute of Technology, at his house out in the country. On the Friday evening, Mahlon Hoagland of the O.G.A. called for me and we joined his brother-in-law Bruce Crawford (also of the O.G.A.) for an evening at the St. Botolph Club in Boston. The Club is housed in a large, elegant old house on a quiet street, and the whole atmosphere was that of a bygone era - quite appropriate for lovers of traditional boats ! There were only a couple of other members in the Club, and we spent a most enjoyable evening chatting about boats and many other subjects, and eating an excellent dinner. At the end of the evening, Mahlon presented me with a lovely momento - a book 'Enduring Friendships', published by the Friendship Sloop Society, of which Mahlon is a member. This is a beautifully produced book with stories, details, and pictures of the lovely clipper-bowed Friendship Sloops.

Saturday I had a 'phone call from yet another O.G.A. and Catboat Association member, Frank Cassidy, suggesting an evening together. Frank and his wife collected me at 7 30, and we drove out to South Natick where they live in a pleasant old timber frame house with a large barn in which Frank is building an 18 foot Catboat to a design by Fenwick Williams. This is a magnificent example of home boat building. Although she is only 18 feet long, her scantlings are massive, and Frank's workmanship is of a very high standard indeed. Some of the fittings he has bought for her would turn many of our U.K. owners green with envy - mast hoops, blocks, etc., all properly and beautifully made. I very much hope that next time I visit the U.S.A. I shall be able to enjoy a sail in her.

Then on Sunday, Frank rang me again to suggest a trip to the well known yachting centre of Marblehead. This proved to be yet another truly memorable day. Our first stop was to look over a Boston and Maine Rail Road Pacific locomotive at the Boston Museum of Science; then down to the docks for a look over the

U.S.S. Constitution - still afloat and kept in wonderful condition. From the docks, a slight detour took us through Malden, Mass. (named after Maldon, Essex), but Malden was a rather disappointing, characterless town of mainly wooden houses with a nondescript town centre - very much a suburb of Boston. Marblehead was much nicer - a wonderful large harbour with obviously very expensive houses round it, and plenty of boatyards to look round. After inspecting a Catboat similar to Frank's and chatting to her owner, we paid a call on Fenwick Williams, where we happily chatted about boats, steam engines, hot air engines, and engineering in general. Then it was time to drive back to Boston and to the airport for my flight to La Guardia. Once again mist and clouds hid the view until we came quite low over the end of Long Island Sound and flew over marina after marina, all apparently packed with small motor cruisers. The landing at La Guardia was quite a surprise as the approach right up to the end of the runway is over water and for a while it looked as if we were going to try and emulate a flying boat !

The weather was far from nice - light rain from a ghastly purplish yellow sky, and far too warm for comfort. A crowded airport bus took me to Grand Central Station, and I grabbed the first taxi I saw to the Royal Manhattan Hotel on Eighth Avenue. The hotel was a pleasant surprise - a large 28 storey building with comfortable, well fitted rooms and very good service, but it is not in a very nice area - the back of Times Square is New York's vice and low theatre area. With quite a lot of reconstruction going on, several apparently derelict buildings, and low quality, unsavoury shops, I did not find it a very pleasant environment.

On the Monday I called in at the conference hall, had a look at 'the world's largest toyshop' (not as big as Hamleys, and most of the toys British and very expensive !) and then at noon I found my way to the New York Yacht Club for a lunch date with John Leavens and Townsend Hornor. Cocktails were drunk about five feet away from the America's Cup, then an excellent lunch in the dining room, in which the ceiling is decorated to look like the underside of a ships deck, with some quite massive hanging knees on the beams, and lamp shades carrying old style compass roses. Then most of the afternoon in the celebrated Model Room, in which the greatest interest is in the surprisingly large models of the competitors in the America's Cup Races. Yet another truly memorable experience ! Then the one bit of sightseeing I suppose everybody does - the top of the Empire State Building. Poor weather spoilt the distant views, but it was still a marvelous experience.

The electronics conference took up the next three days. On the Thursday evening, an engineer I was due to meet for a days discussions on the Friday, Allen Chertoff, invited me to a dinner party at his apartment in the Lincoln Heights block. Grilled grayling, steak, and sweet corn provided the basis of yet another magnificent meal and a most enjoyable evening. Then on the Friday, Allen suggested that we might hold our discussions in his car whilst seeing some of the sights of the city. The Pan Am. Building; the United Nations Building; the Franklin Roosevelt Drive down beside the East River; Brooklyn Tunnel; across the corner of Brooklyn to the Verazano Narrows Bridge; over to Staten Island; ferry back to the Battery past the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island; Wall Street and the financial area with incredibly narrow streets between incredibly high buildings; the West Side Highway and through the dock area to the Midtown Heliport at 30th Street. Then a 15 minute flight in a four man helicopter, down the Hudson, past the old railway docks on the New Jersey shore, Ellis Island, and out to the Statue of Liberty, round which we circled quite close in; then up over the East River, with a wonderful view of the bridges and the Brooklyn Navy Yard; across the lower end of Central Park, and back down the Hudson again.

Yet another memorable meal followed, this time at El Faro Spanish restaurant down in Greenwich Village. Then more sightseeing - all interspersed with serious technical discussions - until it was time for me to take the P.A.T.H. subway from Greeley Square to Hoboken for another ride on the Eerie Lackawanna electric train again, this time out to Dover, New Jersey, to stay with Tony Martin, ex Marconis and founder member of the O.G.A. - Tony crewed with Tom Bolton on the Maria, and then with John Bray on the Nell, before deciding to emigrate to the U.S.A. He now has a very nice house on a pleasant street in Dover, and a good job with a subsiduary of Autonetics. It was very nice indeed to see Tony again, and his wife Mary and their two girls. Tony and Mary did not seem to have changed at all, but Sheila and Caroline were very much 'all American' children. It was a lovely restful weekend after a very full week - enormous meals, plenty to talk about, a visit to the delightful National Park at Morristown - an old battlefield with replicas of a wooden field hospital building and log cabins, and a visit to an enormous discount store which appeared to sell just about everything - including the kitchen sink !

Sunday afternoon I was off again; train, P.A.T.H. subway, taxi and coach to La Guardia, then an Eastern Airlines 727 to Houston in Texas, passing some almost unbelievable cloud effects on the way - great thunderheads - which we were able to fly round ! Houston proved disappointing - dull, flat scenery with scrubby grassland a few trees, but the hotel was interesting. A cross between a tithe barn and Anne Hathaway's cottage, multiplied up to an enormous size and topped by a tower in Scottish baronial size - the whole panelled and furnished throughout in heavy baronial manner. It was an architectural monstrosity, but so monstrous one had to admire it as a monstrosity ! However, the beds were comfortable and the food was good. The climate was most unpleasant - very hot and very humid indeed, and I was not sorry to leave Houston on the Monday evening. Continental Airlines 727 this time, to Phoenix, calling at San Antonio, El Paso and Tucson. As we flew West it got hotter, and the scenery got more barren and mountainous, but it got dark soon after we left San Antonio. At El Paso the 'plane had to make some most alarming manoevres to screw itself down into the valley between the mountains, then at Tucson we made an appalingly bad landing - a real thump, and the jets were still on reverse thrust when we turned at the end of the runway. It was almost unbelievably hot when we landed at Phoenix, but it was dry heat, and quite tolerable. The U.K. representative of the firm I was to visit the next day met me and we drove out to the hotel in Scotsdale - the luxurious end of Phoenix ! He had already decided to apply for a head office job, and what I saw the next day made me think he had good reason. I thought Phoenix was a lovely place. It is quite a new city, and it all looked bright, clean and inviting under the brilliant desert sun. Our hotel was quite luxurious - easily the best of the whole trip. Coconut palms and date palms grew outside the bedrooms, and there was a lovely, inviting, swimming pool. The whole place had a leisurely, peaceful, inviting atmosphere - so different from the sullen atmosphere in New York, Boston or Houston. Our visits to the firms two different establishments involved a short drive across real desert the next day - rocks, sand, and giant cacti. I cursed the fact that the shutter on my camera had gone wrong !! I had just the one day in Phoenix, then a short flight with T.W.A. to Los Angeles, where Eric Julber and his wife Kristin met me at the airport.

Eric has a lovely house in a tree lined, quiet street in a canyon in Santa Monica, about five minutes walk from the Will Rogers Beach and the blue, warm Pacific. Wednesday was a quiet day - shopping with Kristin and her two children in the morning, swimming and lazing on the beach in the sun in the afternoon, and a car tour of Los Angeles with Eric and Kristin in the evening - to all the well known places - Sunset Boulevard, Bel Air, Beverly Hills, Hollywood Heights, Wilshire Boulevard, The Brown Derby, etc. etc. I thought that Los Angeles was a very nice place.

Thursday was another day's work at a firm in Newbury Park to the N.W. of Los Angeles. Lunch included Abalone steaks - a large shellfish, which I found very nice indeed. Back to Santa Monica via Malibu Canyon in nice time for a swim before dinner, then in the evening Eric and I set off on a tour in his Porsche. but when we got to Lancaster, about 150 miles out, we decided the car was not pulling properly, and a call at a service station confirmed that it was running on only three cylinders, so we turned back to Santa Monica to make an early start the next morning in Kristin's Volvo.

Through the San Fernando Valley, across a corner of the MojaveDesert - with real desert scenery - and up Owens Valley, with the massive peaks of the Sierra Nevada on our left. At Lone Pine we turned off the main road up a side road for a closer look at Mount Whitney, the highest peak in the country, then we stopped at a diner in Lone Pine for breakfast. In the desert atmosphere it was really hot by then, so we didn't hang about too long, but pressed on past Klondike Lake, through Bishop, and over the Sherwin Summit (over7,000 ft.). A bit further up the road we were stopped by a maintenance worker who told us there was some trouble ahead and we would be held up for about ten minutes. I got out and walked up round a corner and into a delightful coniferous wood, with some enormous pine cones lying around. A large truck and trailer had slipped off the side of the road, and three hefty breakdown trucks were trying to right the truck, with wires right across the road. I had a word with a friendly traffic policeman in charge of operations, who obligingly posed by the overturned truck so I could get a photograph of him with his large revolver prominently displayed, and then to my surprise I was solemnly and formally introduced to the Deputy Sherrif (complete with large star and gun) and the boss of the road maintenance crew. After about a quarter of an hour they decided the partially righted truck would not slip over again if they allowed the traffic to pass, so we were able to drive on. Over Deadmans Pass (8040 ft.), still with the impressive Sierra Nevadas on our left, then we turned off left, up into the mountains, to go over Tioga Pass (9941ft.) into Yosemite National Park. At the summit of the pass I went for a walk on the snow, and took some photographs, then we drove down through alpine scenery to Lake Tenaya (still above 8,000ft.) where Eric had a swim, although snow was still lying on the banks in places. Yosemite Park is enormous, and it was about a fifty mile drive down to the valley, where we booked in at the Motel for the night, and then went out to have a look at the famous waterfalls and the large rock formations. It was all most impressive.

It was a novel experience to be woken at about 3 a.m. by bears rummaging in the trash cans ! We made a very early start on the Saturday so as to cross the central Californian Valley before it got too hot. Down out of the mountains and onto the flat valley floor - a rather dull but obviously prosperous agricultural area - enormous orchards; a vast free-range poultry farm; small airfields with crop spraying aircraft and small private 'planes, and straggling small townships of mainly single storey buildings, at one of which, Los Banos, we stopped for breakfast. Then on over the Diablo Range Mountains, past the enormous San Luis Reservoir and over Pacheco Pass (1,386 ft.), across the San Benito Valley, over more mountains, and down into Monterey, where we explored the Fisherman s Wharf area and Cannery Row, immortalised by John Steinbeck. Over the peninsular for a look at Carmel, then a stop at Point Lobos Nature Reserve, and down the magnificent coast road through Big Sur. For miles this road is blasted out of the face of the mountains along the coast, with graceful concrete bridges across the precipitous canyons.

We stopped for a late lunch at a restaurant called Nepenthe, perched high on a crag above the sea, but unfortunately fog above the sea spoilt the view; then our next call was Castro Canyon, where we explored a small grove of giant redwoods.

Then on down the coast road until the mountains on the left flattened out somewhat at San Simeon, where we could see Hearst's castle on the skyline. A stop at San Simeon for a run on the beach and a swim for Eric - the beach was surprisingly cold and windswept. Then on through the evening to Santa Barbara where we stopped for dinner at a restaurant at the end of the marina. As in most of the marinas, most of the boats were power boats, but there were a few interesting looking schooners and ketches. When we had ordered a meal, Eric went out to 'phone Kristin and tell her we would be back later that evening, and by chance bumped into the American yacht skipper Bill Irvine, and we had some really interesting talk with our food ! Then back to Santa Monica in the dark, having covered almost a thousand miles in the two days of intensive sightseeing.

Sunday, Kristin took me to a locomotive and travel museum in Griffith Park, next to which the local Model Rail Road Society have a permanent passenger carrying model track on which they were running some interesting steam locomotives.

Monday morning, Eric and I flew up to San Francisco, where Eric had some business. A bit of shopping in the city centre, then we went out to the dock area, where there is a State Park on one of the piers with some interesting historic ships - a 3 masted schooner, a small steam ship, a paddle wheel ferry boat, and a small scow schooner - not much more than a rectangular box with a bowsprit one end and a rudder the other, with a centreboard. The park restaurant was the galley and saloon of the steamer - quite a novel and attractive idea. Eric had to work in the afternoon, so he left me looking round the boats. A short way along the docks was the three masted Cape Horn ship Balclutha, with an old paddle wheel tug alongside her. All these boats were in immaculate condition, and it was hard to realise that all had a lifetime of hard work behind them. Then after the ships theree were the cable cars to watch. When Eric rejoined me, we went up to the top of Nob Hill, to the Mark Hopkins Hotel to admire the fantastic views over the city from the observation lounge on the top floor. Then downtown for dinner, after which Eric flew back home and I explored San Francisco for the whole eveing, staying at the Chancellor Hotel on Powell Street. Like Los Angeles and Phoenix, San Francisco presented a clean, fresh, friendly aspect, and with its closely built big buildings, it was the nearest to a British city centre I saw in America.

Next morning I took the Greyhound bus down to San Jose for three days work, staying two nights at the Ramada Inn at Santa Clara. The Ramada Inn was a very nice place to stay, but poor food and very bad service in the restaurant rather spoilt it. On the Thursday evening I flew back to Los Angeles, with just time for a swim before dinner. Then Friday saw one of the real high spots of the whole trip - a visit to Disneyland. That place deserves a listing amongst the wonders of the modern world. It is all on a vast scale, and the many rides and attractions are all beautifully built, regardless of expense. Like Mystic Seaport, there is far too much of it to describe here.

Then on the Saturday we all drove down to Newport Beach where Eric keeps his replica of a Danish yacht of the 1840's Sol Lys. We did not sail Sol Lys, but used her as a base for a visit to Briggs Cunningham's car museum, and for swimming, sunbathing, and just generally lazing. Eric and I had a sail in a hired boat, and we lazed around doing as little as possible. On the Monday, we saw John Wayne come in with his large motor yacht, and there was usually plenty to watch on the water. On the Monday evening we drove back to Santa Monica again.

Tuesday was spent shopping for souvenirs and presents, and swimming in the afternoon, then Wednesday morning I had to pack ready to catch the afternoon flight direct to Heath Row. It had all been a wonderful experience; I had met some delightful people, and I had found that much that I had heard against America was somewhat exagerated. I certainly intend to go there again sometime, somehow !

Amongst my many souvenirs of the trip, I have about 500 slides of Mystic, Yosemite, Disneyland, American locomotives, Catboats, and just general scenery. We should be very happy to show these to any members who care to call in on winter evenings (check that we will be in first !).

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BOOK REVIEWS

THE NORTHSEAMEN by John Leather, published by Terence Dalton. 320 pages, over 100 illustrations. £4.50

For all who love gaff rig, tradition, the history of big yacht racing, or the Essex fishing scene, this book is one you must not miss. On reading it, one possible criticism emerges, and that is the title. It seems that it might more accurately have been called 'The Colnesiders', as it is concerned throughout with the men of Brightlingsea, Wivenhoe, and Rowhedge, who sailed far beyond the confines of the North Sea !

This is the story of the inshore and offshore fishermen, salvagers and smugglers who became professional yachtsmen and brought a measure of prosperity to the lower Colne Valley. It is also the story of the boats they sailed, and the men who designed, built and maintained them.

John Leather is a descendant of these Colneside sailors, and he has lived and worked with the last survivors of the great age of sail. Realising how much of the lives of these men was unrecorded, John set out to produce a lasting memorial to these great men, and the result is a book which is very hard indeed to put down. The style is chatty and vividly descriptive, and every chapter is packed with valuable facts about the fisheries, the fishing smacks, the local regattas, the great racers of the Victorian era, or the great boat builders like Sainty, Harvey, or Aldous.

I would have liked to have read more about the racing yachts - John sometimes leaves the reader behind as fact after fact rolls from his pen. The use of waterline length, length overall, tonnage, or rating to describe the boats tends to get a trifle confusing in places, and one sometimes has to think hard to remember the relative sizes of the yachts being described.

The various stories of the skippers of these yachts make wonderful reading, and any members who wonder about the naming of our latest East Coast Race Trophy should buy a copy of the Northseamen and read about the Neva and her wonderful owner. For any not interested in boat building, fishing, salvaging, smuggling, or racing, there is a nice account of Lord Brassey's cruising in the Sunbeam !

John's last book won the 'Best Book of the Sea' award for 1970 - I would rate this book even better, and a more valuable contribution to the history of sailing than 'Gaff Rig', and I can strongly recommend it to all members. Wives - please note - this will solve your worries about what to buy him for Christmas.

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THE MAPLIN BIRD; WINDFALL; THUNDER IN THE SKY; and THE PLAN FOR BIRDMARSH all by Kathleen M. Peyton, published by the Oxford University Press at 80p to 90p (160 - 200 pages).

These are intended as books for teenagers, but I feel sure they will have a wider appeal - I enjoyed reading them, and Jane (9 Yrs.) also liked the bits she has found time to read. Unlike all to many other nautical novels, the details of boats, the sea (and even the O.G.A. burgee!) are authentic - as is to be expected from the wife of a founder member of the O.G.A.. The language of the seamen has been tactfully moderated, but the atmosphere remains, and the descriptions of life ashore in bygone days are excellent. The Maplin Bird involves fishing and smuggling in southern Essex; Windfall follows the fortunes and misfortunes of an Essex fishing family; and Thunder in the Sky deals with bargeing in World War 1. The Plan for Birdmarsh is

the most modern of the quartet, with a possible Marina project in rural Essex, a description of a smack race, and a shipwreck.

All the books have well thought out plots and excellent characterization. Any junior crew members should welcome one (or more!) of these books as Christmas or birthday presents.

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EIGHT DAYS LIVERPOOL TO BOSTON

Continuing the story of Jon Wainwright's crossing of England in the prawner Deva.

Throughout the voyage Nick and I had been arguing whether to drink first and eat afterwards or vice versa. My northern upbringing suggested we should do the latter, but with true English diplomacy we arrived at a compromise. We would drink before AND after the meal, and, to save loss of face on my part, the 'jam-butties' (Knotty Ash style) would stay routine issue in the morning.

The pub, incidentally, was terrible. Yorkshiremen in their dark suits sat in every available chair contemplating their ale in deathly silence. One could sense the disgust at our rowdy arrival.

The next morning we set off for Leeds. The only interesting part about this journey was the tow we gave to two canoeists. Within a mile one chap had capsized and the other had sheared into a tree. Happily there was no loss of life. Also for the last five miles we had collected a polythene bag round the prop - the water was too dirty to clear it.

At the last lock on the Leeds - Liverpool canal we waited for tenminutes for the gin-palace, which had gained on Deva's crippled pace. Considering that there was no wind and their craft was twin screw with astern gear, I did not think it possible for a forty foot craft to enter a fourteen foot lock beam-ways. After more swearing etc., we managed to warp her in the right way. We stopped in Leeds to take on provisions. I cannot say that either from an architectural point of view or an amenity point that Leeds impressed me.

After victualling we set off down the Aire and Calder Navigation, the gin-palace hot on our heels. The Navigation was like an American freeway compared with the cart-track atmosphere of the Leeds-Liverpool Canal. The locks were about 300 feet long - long enough for Deva to keep going while the water made a level. There were traffic lights on a gantry over the lock. The waterway was tremendously busy with oil barges and coal carriers. Even so, lock keepers were very courteous - they let the water down very gently and strolled over for a chat - they were amazed that a craft of Deva's size could have crossed the Pennines - compared with a 200 ton lighter she does look puny.

We had one bit of luck that day. As the day drew on to five thirty we locked into a huge lock while the keeper came over and told us that he stopped work at half past five, thus we were lucky. This cheered us considerably as the gin palace was only fifteen minutes astern. The remaining locks stayed open all night. Deva ploughed on through the evening - we wanted to get clear of the Leeds industrial complex. It was interesting to see the road bridges kept open for water borne traffic. Obviously the waterways round there take more than the roads. Pub time was nine o'clock - not a very good session, the pub being a carbon copy of the night before.

The next morning was not a good one. We met our first nasty lock keeper. He swore at us for using fenders - thought we were bourgoise - and dropped us like a ton of bricks. Shortly after the Stuart decided to take a breather - fed up with the same old plug. By sweet coincidence a tanker came past at eight knots, pushing the whole canal in front of her and Deva hit the bottom

with a bang and went on her beam ends as the convex surge revealed the canal bed.

The navigation was in many parts a canalised river and thus we had the help of about one knot of current (it had rained every day on the cut.) At one point, Deva overhauled a taxi ! One feature of the Northeast waterways is the use of trains of canal craft - really 50 - 100 tonlighters towed 10 at a time. Deva was stuck behind a train of these 'Tom-Puddings' (as they are knownlocally) in the New Junction Canal, a link to the Sheffield and North Yorkshire Navigation. It was impossible to overtake these strange vehicles, for they were swinging from one side of the bank to the other. We ate luncheon while they locked through.

Soon it was time to turn to port for the Stainforth and Keadby Canal which was to take us to the River Trent. This canal is not quite as advanced as the other Northeastern waterways - locks are operated by hand. One has to sound a siren for the keeper to emerge from his hen house or vegetable patch and operate the lock. This is all right for motor barges but the only sound we could manage was by clouting the stew pan (which was often laundering underwear) with a spanner.

The canal to Keadby is for the most part very boring. We nearly ran down a small coaster coming through a swing bridge - we thought it was too good to be true seeing the bridge open well in advance ! Otherwise the only thing which happened was that I was soaked in a torrential downpour which lasted four hours. A fair amount of water went through the masthole (covered by the W.C. seat). We arrived at Keadby Lock to find that the tide was wrong for locking out. So I went to bed for the afternoon while Nick went out for some cigarettes. The pub at Keadby should be avoided too. A poor class Yorkshire pub - these Yorkshire pubs were putting me off my beer.

The next morning we took the flood up the tidal Trent. The current was very strong giving Deva an extra four knots. We were passed by a few motor keels, which were doing at least ten knots. The river also had very difficult bends to negotiate. One craft passed us - she was the ultimate in luxury motor yachts - too classy for a gin-palace ! After three hours had passed we came upon the biggest barge jam I have ever seen. There must have been fifty barges anchoring, going aground, turning about, hooting, and the luxury yacht looking very confused in the middle.

Well, Deva couldn't stop - no brakes - I wouldn't like to drop one of my anchors in the Trent - it would just dissolve in the polluted acid - (water impurities). Anyway we were doing at least six knots over the ground so anchoring was out of the question. The innevitable happened. The Stuart needed a bonus plug cleaning for dealing with barge jams, and promptly cut out. I gave the helm to Nick while I dived below the change the plug. Luckily the engine started fourth swing. As I emerged on deck I saw Deva pick up just as she was about to be swept on to a nasty looking tree trunk on a plinth of rocks.

Nick did a beautiful helming job. It would have done credit to a taxi driver in Marble Arch. He must have 'carved up' twenty barges in two zig-zags across the river. After missing a stone embankment by three inches he handed the tiller to me in a cold sweat. The whole episode had been like a nightmare. Nothing was real, nothing logical.

We forked off the Trent up a cut to Torksey (for the Fossdyke and Witham Navigation). Our scrapes were not over yet. We could not see the lock for a round-arched bridge, so we did not slow down at all. Some twenty yards from the bridge Deva was still steaming at her regular five knots, when, like a thunderbolt from Hell, a barge came surging out of the tunnel on the top of a seething, muddy surge. They had just flushed a British Waterways hotel barge out of the lock.

I swung the tiller to starboard and the old Deva heeled her gunwale under and spun to port, missing the barge by inches (thank the Lord for rockered keels). Deva was now heading for the mud bank. The helm was reversed and her podgy quarter swung right up the bank. With the force of gravity behind her, the old nobby dived into the water again and gathering speed shot through the tunnel on a port turn, her crew yelling abuse at British Waterways hotel barge operatives. Deva finally skidded (on her fenders) to a halt in the relative peace of Torksey lock.

About five minutes after we had tied up the luxury yacht tried to enter the lock. To begin with she managed to mangle her bulwark plates on the port bow. She went astern out of the lock, stopped to go ahead again. With a roar of twin Rolls Royce diesels she made one more attempt. This time she only scrped the paint off the dent. Twelve feet of bows entered the lock and then no more came.

She had grounded on the lock sill. The lock keeper went up to her captain and told him that it was high water now. Furthermore the water wouldn't be so high for another week ! So the poor chap had to go astern, back to the ebbing Trent and a mud berth for another seven days ! Apparently Deva had only just scraped through - the indicating marks read only three feet nine - her exact draught. If the sill hadn't been slightly worn we would have scraped.

It was pleasant to be back on the placid waters again. The canal had been dug by the Romans in the days of Latin occupation. Like their roads, the engineers had built it straight, so it was a case of Deva guiding herself along the canal. It must have seemed strange to towpath walkers to see a craft motoring unaided up the cut, guided by the equal pressures of liquid between the nobby and the bamks. We occasionally looked where we were going but the general form was that one brewed tea whilst the other slept off the previous nights excesses.

The countryside appeared very fertile. Huge fields of grain extended behind the high canal banks. I would like to have had a better look at Lincolnshire's countryside, but the thought of getting to Lincoln in time for a good drinking session made us spur Deva on. I had told Nick that Lincoln was a good place - better than Keadby. (Nick thinks that the North is all the same from St. Albans upwards.)

We were not disappointed with Lincoln city. We moored in a huge basin where the Fossdyke Canal joins the River Witham. Architecturally Lincoln needs no describing. It is certainly a very interesting city, although poor new buildings have been erected. We spent some time walking the streets before diving into a pub. The pub was rather refined (unusual for Lincolnshire) and the beer was refrigerated and not cellar temperature, which curbed our capacity that night.

The next morning we set off for the last inland leg - Boston in 8 days or bust. We had on the previous days made enquiries about time for the Liverpool to Boston run - not many people have done the exact passage, but the best times we had come across w were in the region of a fortnight. Deva had been averaging well over 4 knots (including locking and swinging bridges) through the Leeds - Liverpool Canal and on the Northeastern Waterways slightly higher, although tides were not favourable at Torksey - we lost half a day there. Hangovers also accounted for ten per cent extra time. Anyway, Deva was making excellent time - most waterways people I had spoken to reckoned on 3 weeks as an average allowable time for a power cruiser. However it is the lines of a craft which count for speed rather than a hefty power unit.

Deva's mini-powered unit was making itself noticed. We passed through the Glory Hole in Lincoln (a narrow enclosure of tall, old buildings with the cut running through its axis) leaving it full of smoke - we couldn't see the other end.

We emerged from this Lincoln feature to find another craft waiting to go through a guillotine lock. An official was working the lock, winding the blade ever so slowly. Having a following wind, no convenient tow path and no astern gear, all we could do was to throttle back and hope the guillotine would have been raised enough for us to pass under.

We cleared confidently by half an inch !

It was not long before we had another clearance problem. Just down river from Lincoln there is a large swing bridge. When we came upon it there were several craft waiting to go through. Apparently the bridge keeper had a reputation for deliberately delaying water-borne traffic. Some craft had been waiting for half an hour. Well, I have always been an advocate of low freeboard. There are too many motor-gallions in commission - and some Bermudian-rigged ones, too. So Deva stayed on course - I'm pretty sure that we saw the bridge keeper deserting his post at the sight of a bridge-breaking gaffer !

Nick lay up forward to lower the bows half an inch - so the mast (layed on deck) would clear - and she did - leaving astern half a dozen peeved motor-gallions.

There's not much more to be said about the River Witham. It was straight, wide and high banked. A good navigational river, but lacking the intimacy of a run-down canal like the Leeds - Liverpool. We were relieved to see the end in sight - the Boston Stump, a huge Church structure, a branchless tree towering over the town more famous for its American daughter.

For the next two hours the stump grew larger as Deva steered herself along the canal while one crew slept and the other brewed tea, sheltering from the rain. Gradually the remoteness of the fens became busier, moored craft becoming more numerous, and eight days out of Liverpool, the little Lancashire nobby steamed into Boston (appropriately within spitting distance of the pub). She had made very good time - we managed to slip in 'last orders' (which lasted a lot longer than they should have done) and went into the town to do the victualling.

Jon Wainwright.

The concluding section of Jon's account - the voyage from Boston to Richmond - will follow in a later issue - I hope all in one lump ! J.A.S.

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