

1983/4

Old Gaffers Association Newsletter



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NEWSLETTER No. 1983/4

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COVER PICTURE: VELSIA (445)

Some Memories and Reflections, by Philip Cox.

I first stepped aboard Velsia in the spring of 1944, before the invasion of Normandy, when the end of the war still seemed light years away. My brief periods of leave from the Navy were spent with Leslie Hinton keeping the old boat wind and water tight; materials were scarce but we could buy Jeffries Marine glue which we poured into the deck seams. We had candles for lighting; I still prefer candlelight except when trying to read a chart. When it was cold we used to 'borrow' some coke from the bunker of the old 'Shalimar', a clipper bowed gentleman's yacht, laid up in the adjoining mud berth, a reminder of a bygone age.

They were the days of dried egg and potatoes when even bread was rationed and whale steaks were considered a delicacy. But we could obtain fresh milk from the farm in Swanwick Lane and the water of the Hamble was clean enough for swimming! In those days the Richardsons lived in an old boat called Rose a few yards away from Velsia and I recall Mike lowering their eldest into the river for a swim well before his first birthday.

In June 1945 after the end of the war in Europe we received permission from the Admiralty, where Leslie was working, to do some restricted sailing. We disentangled the running rigging which was lying in a great heap in the store ashore. After much debate as to what went where we managed to find a place for everything with nothing to spare. It is worthy of note that we have hardly altered the arrangement ever since. Of course the Italian hemp (purchased by weight at 7/6d. per pound, which we considered very expensive) has given way to terylene which lasts at least ten times as long.

I see from an old receipt that we paid Moody's 3/- per week for our mudberth in 1951, a 20 per cent rise from the 2/6d. we paid at the end of the war.

I used to estimate that the running expenses of Velsia during the 1950s were about equivalent to the cost of smoking 20 cigarettes a day. This may seem hard to accept but another bill shows the cost of transporting our pram dinghy by rail from Bursledon to my home in Birmingham in 1951 as 13/10d.

The mast had remained stepped throughout the war years. It appeared to be sound but the stitching, horizontally sewn of rather lightweight cotton of uncertain age seemed a little frayed in places. However we were keen to get her sailing and at last, on a memorable day in September 1945 we set off down the Solent in a brisk SW blow. She behaved well and the thrill of tasting the freedom of the seas after 6 years of war is something I shall never forget. We anchored in the Newtown River with but one other very elderly gaffer for company. I do not recall her name but she was the home of a retired local harbour master who sailed her alone and who beguiled us with the peaceful strains of his guitar a cable distant as the sun sank behind the Hampshire shore.

The next day we sailed to Groves and Guttridge's yard in Cowes where during the winter of 45/46 Velsia received an extensive refit which included a major rearrangement of the accommodation and a new mast. When they removed the old mast it fractured at the deck where only about 1½ in. diameter of sound timber remained. We recalled that stiff beat to Newtown with some alarm!

The only work required on the hull was a renewal of about one third of the covering board on one side together with a new deck rail all round. A new Simpson Lawrence anchor winch was fitted and it continues to give reliable service to this day. The new mast, a Norwegian pine tree, of uncertain age, is now somewhat bowed and scarred with the years. It is lifted out every other year for varnishing and inspection and would appear to have many years of life yet.

In 1946, after my release from the RNVR, we sailed in the Solent and across to Poole to get the 'feel' of the vessel. It was a summer of strong winds and fairly frequent gales so we learnt fast. One morning, when lying at anchor in Newtown, we watched Dyarchy come storming in under full sail, having crossed from Lymington, towing her dinghy which was completely waterlogged. Roger Pinkney invited us aboard and we were introduced to his redoubtable mother who appeared from her cabin forward of the mast.

In August of that summer we obtained visas for France and Spain and with a crew of three we set off down channel. One of the attractions of 'going foreign' in those immediate post war years, when strict food rationing still affected our lives in the U.K., was the permission to draw seamens rations (with the blessing of H.M. Customs and Immigration of course). Browns Stores in Cowes High Street specialised in the supply of such rations which were remarkably generous. It is for me a nostalgic memory to recall the delivery on board of box after box of canned meats, fruit and other goodies.

We got no further than Douarnenez that summer being held up by heavy gales in Morlaix and again in Le Fret a few miles from Brest. Returning across the channel we were obliged to heave-to when some miles south of the Lizard because of the strong wind and low visibility. Alas our poor old mainsail was not man enough for the conditions and suddenly tore from leach to luff. It was then

that we discovered that Velsia would lie hove-to simply with a small reefed staysail set aback. In those days we always carried a heavy cotton trysail which was loose footed with a small gaff. Changing to this in the dark on a heavily pitching deck with no guard rails took about three hours which gave us plenty of time to reflect upon and to appreciate her qualities as a sea boat. So reefed she will make slowly to windward in a strong gale.

I spent many hours repairing rents in the seams of that old mainsail which with the trysail had to serve us until 1948 when Leslie could afford the price of a beautiful vertically cut flax loosefooted mainsail with reef points and roped all round. This heavy sail provided all the peace of mind we needed and we enjoyed some wonderful sailing over the years. It was beautifully soft and pleasant to handle when dry but of course when wet it soaked up a vast weight of water and was a man's job to handle. Made by Harper Marine of Rochester it lasted us until 1962 when we could no longer resist the temptations of terylene. Bruce Banks made us a fine sail; I believe it was one of the first large sails to come from his now famous loft. We are still using it and it has never let us down.

When cruising, whatever the weather we usually heave-to and cook a proper meal at least once and sometimes twice every 24 hours on our two-burner primus. Not only does this revive flagging spirits in strong winds and gloomy weather but it helps to inspire new members of the crew with confidence in the boat! During the watches of a long wet night mugs of hot cocoa made with sweetened condensed milk cannot be beaten - provided the mugs are washed up quickly in the morning!

Our cruising has extended from the north coast of Spain to Oslo and the southern coast of Ireland. We have explored the waterways of Holland three times and sailed among the Danish Islands. We have yet to cruise the west coast of Scotland but there is still plenty of time as we approach our Centenary.

I have been looking at some of our early experiences recorded long ago and the following may be of interest:

In August 1948 we called at Brest on passage to Belle Ile for petrol and charts of the French west coast. Entering the commercial harbour we noticed great destruction everywhere, the outer seawall had been breached by bombs in many places and the town itself had been reduced to a wasteland above the docks. There were no big ships in the harbour, the largest being a rusty old vessel of perhaps 2000 tons moored to the inner side of the seawall. The barometer was falling ominously and we toyed with the idea of anchoring under her lee as it would offer better shelter than the battered seawall. We decided against this because of the long row to the steps. This decision may have saved our lives and Velsia from destruction.

The engine died as we came to our anchorage; the last of our petrol had gone. In those days it was scarce and rationed.

It was the afternoon of Saturday August 7th. The barometer was falling more rapidly now and a grey scud began to blow from the SE across the wide expanse of the Rade de Brest. The tide was still fairly low, causing the harbour walls, such as they were to tower above us and afford reasonable shelter. We lay to a single anchor - a 45lb CQR - in about 5 fathoms and the tide would rise about 18 feet.

A British yacht, Clodagh, arrived from Plymouth not long after us and anchored near by. Shortly after this the wind became very gusty and several of the other yachts began to drag their anchors and to drift towards the inner quays. Clodagh was soon in difficulties and appeared to be in imminent danger of going upon some jagged concrete piles when a motor boat came to her aid and she was soon reasonably snug alongside a weather wall. Other yachts were milling about, using their engines to stem the wind and endeavouring to persuade their anchors to hold. It seemed to us, who had so far ridden safely to our CQR and 30 fathoms of chain, that none of the others had veered sufficient chain, but perhaps they had no more. However there were no disasters as one by one they were taken in tow alongside. Only three boats including ourselves remained at anchor.

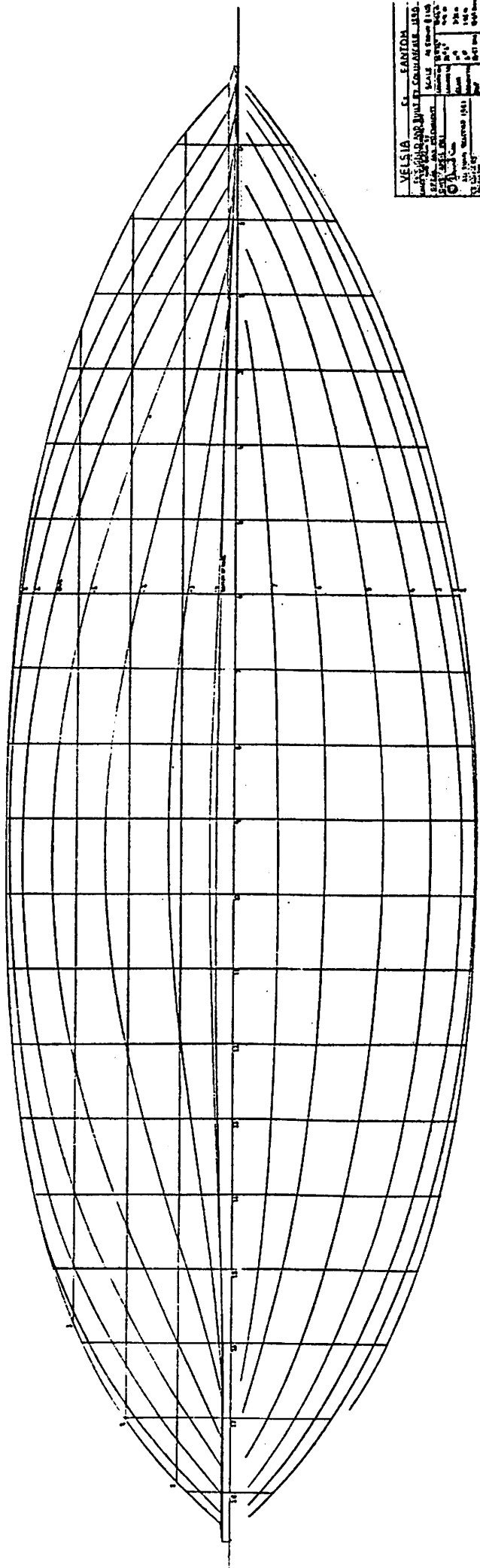
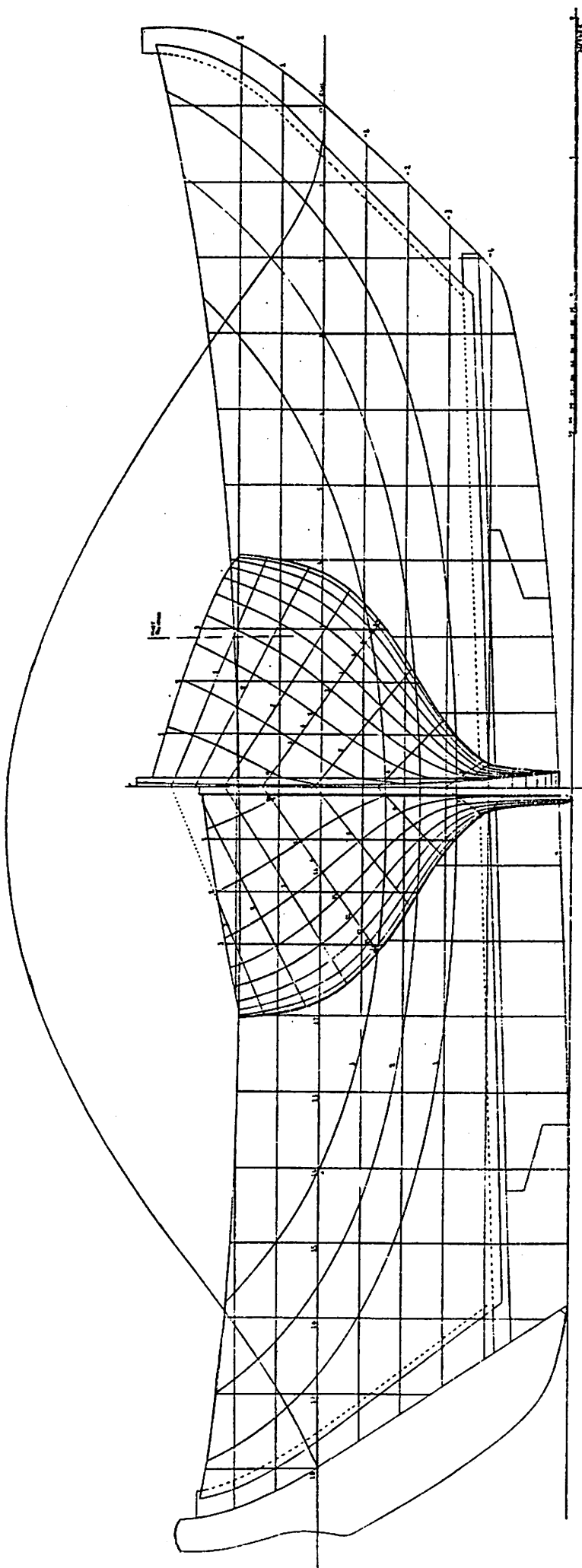
The tide rose and with it the wind which was now howling with great violence out of the south east. A nasty sea began to penetrate the harbour as the waves began to crash through the bomb pitted breakwater whose protective value diminished every minute as the tide rose. Velsia began to pitch violently and there was obviously a considerable strain on the chain - we veered to 40 fathoms for safety's sake. There was no question of trying to lay out our kedge from the dinghy in such conditions. We kept the latter secured on deck. So we prayed for the anchor and chain to hold; how we thought about that weakest link. The view to windward was fearsome. Great sheets of spume and spray were writhing above the breakwater which was practically submerged by the abnormally high tide. The rain and spray stung our faces. I noticed a small plank of wood actually being turned over and over by the force of the wind as it floated past the boat.

Away on the top of the town the great marquee of M. Bouglioni's Circus was blown away leaving only the poles and desolation. It had been a very gay sight with its many flags and streamers. Against the jetties, exposed to the full force of the wind and waves, we could see men desperately trying to save boats which were pounding against the stone quays now rapidly being transformed into dangerous reefs as the tide rose and flowed over the road ways.

A 50 ft. motor trawler sank before our eyes and this was the first of many. A 3 span roof from one of the temporary harbour buildings was whipped off and whirled away on the wind amid flying debris. To add to the drama from the adjoining naval harbour came the agonised hooting and wailing of many sirens of ships and vessels in distress.

Three vessels, including the large rusty hull, had been moored against our sea wall and one by one they began to part their mooring wires. The two smaller craft came adrift first and we watched with apprehension as they blew, entirely out of control, across the harbour to disappear behind the store sheds of an inner basin. Then the single remaining wire holding the rusty 2000 tonner parted and she moved slowly across in the wake of the others to sink against one of the inner walls. What would have been our fate had we anchored under her lee I hate to contemplate.

For two hours the sea surged and stormed over the jetties and roadways washing away great piles of sand and gravel and tossing barrels and packing cases into chaos.



At 8.30 p.m. the barometer ceased its precipitous fall and immediately began to rise equally steeply. Our barograph trace formed a steep V. The wind then veered sharply and we came under the lee of the western sea wall and realised that the greatest danger had passed. Nonetheless we kept anchor watches until about 2 a.m. as the wind continued with unabated strength until well after midnight. It was reported to have attained 100 m.p.h. during this storm which was said to have been the aftermath of a tropical cyclone which originated in the Caribbean and moved with immense speed across the Atlantic.

It is of some interest to compare this storm with the Fastnet gale of 1979. During that storm Velsia was moored in the secure shelter of Kinsale harbour in County Cork as a consequence of which I have an excellent barograph trace of both depressions. They are remarkably alike except that the Kinsale trace has a small flat at the base of the V as the centre of the storm probably passed to the south.

By coincidence the Plymouth - Santander race was in progress at the time of the Brest gale and most of the fleet was off the Brest peninsular at the time. The yachts were widely scattered by the storm but there was no loss of life or vessel.

I now realise with the experience I have of handling Velsia in heavy winds under sail that we should have prepared for the worst in Brest by rigging the small storm jib and fully reefed trysail ready for use had our ground tackle failed. I believe it ought to have been possible to manoeuvre her under sail to a place of safety. In this connection I have attached a passage from 'Colin Archer - A Memoir' by James Archer, which was privately published in 1949. Velsia's lines are remarkably similar to those of the rescue boats and so she is probably capable of similar movement in restricted waters, had we the skill to try.

Looking back over the years the most nerve wracking times during storms have been when we have been in harbour. At sea with adequate room it has been uncomfortable but safe.

Of course fog at sea is another matter. I recall vividly the passage down channel in the early 60's en route for Quiberon Bay to join our wives and young children in a rented house. It was slow going with a good deal of light contrary wind and very little sunshine to brighten our days. We were fairly close to the rock strewn coast east of La Vierge and L'Abervracht. Night had fallen and we could see the lighthouse so pressed on towards the W with the intention of going through the Chenal du Four. Suddenly the light disappeared and we were enveloped in dank wet fog with visibility seemingly no more than the length of the boat. That coast with its strong tides is no place for a sailing boat in fog without radar. On the other hand the shipping lanes around Ushant presented an equally offputting prospect. We waited for a time to give the fog a chance to clear and hoped that the mid-night shipping forecast would offer some comfort. No such luck and so a decision had to be made.

With our Beme Loop direction finder we were able to find the bearing of Ushant and so we headed NW away from the tides and the rocks. We calculated that it would be daylight before we reached the steamer lanes and hoped that visibility would have increased sufficiently for us to get out of the way of any threatening ship. At least we would be in deep water away from the rocks and shoals.

There was only a light wind but our Coventry Victor diesel was reliable although we could achieve little more than 3 knots with it in the conditions. For hours we motor sailed giving Ushant a 10 mile berth; we never saw it as the fog never lifted. Slowly the D.F. bearing changed and then more rapidly as the tide increased in our favour. Visibility improved sufficiently to enable us to see the ghostly outline of ships at a distance of about a cable and from time to time we stopped the engine to listen. It was a nerve wracking business but although we glimpsed the whiteness of the bow wave of several vessels passing us by, we never had to alter course to avoid collision. Eventually Ushant bore due E and our spirits rose as we headed S to clear the Amen rocks before heading into the Bay.

That morning we passed under a cloud front, a straight line ruled across the sky; the heavens became a cloudless blue, the seas of Biscay sparkled and danced in the sunshine and at a steady 5 knots with spinnaker set we were soon reunited with our loved ones.

These recollections are some of the many now stored in my memory after nearly 40 years of sailing in Velsia. The anxious times serve to highlight the countless happy times and perhaps explain why we return to the sea again and again.

VELSIA, A Short History, by David Cox.

In 1980 I sailed Velsia to Norway with a number of friends and while there we managed to fill a few of the gaps in her long history.

She was designed and built by Colin Archer at Tolderodden, Larvik, in 1890 for W.O. Sorensen. The latter must have seen a yacht named Vinga in Sweden because Velsia, originally named Fantom, was a scaled up version of Vinga. We discovered this while looking at Colin Archer's work lists and a sail plan of Vinga which are preserved in the Larvik Museum. The sail plan, apart from having two scales on it, also had two sail plans, one having the name W.O.Sorensen written by where the plans differed.

The actual shear plans for the two yachts look different, Velsia's having relatively less freeboard amidships. I would imagine that Vinga, being 4 feet shorter had to have a higher freeboard to give the headroom down below.

Sorensen raced the boat at the local regattas from Oslo to Christiansand and also on the Swedish coast. She appears to have done quite well as some of the results are displayed on engraved silver plaques on the main beam in the cabin. We verified that Velsia was definitely Fantom when we found the races in a book of Norwegian Regattas from 1860 - 1920 and the results tallied with those on the beam.

Colin Archer at the same time was building other yachts which from their lines look as if they were built mainly for racing. The Venus and the Storgut were each about 4 feet longer than Velsia and she never beat them in races although she was usually in third position when the others were racing.

Their lines aft of amidships are very similar to Velsia's but forward there is a marked difference. The half angle of entry for Velsia is about 33° compared to 20° for Storgut. The bow stations for Storgut are much more vertical than those of Velsia so leading to a very deep forefoot which probably improved windward performance. Studying Velsia's lines, she looks as if she came from the pilot cutter stable as the body plan is almost identical to a pilot cutter built one year before. The only difference being that the stations are laid over to produce a beamier boat than Velsia.

Sorensen passed Fantom over to his son in about 1905, who must have kept her until about the outbreak of the first world war when she was sold to H. Charles Dick, the British Consul in Oslo. He renamed her Seagull and returned with her to Dartmouth. In about 1919 she was once again in Oslo, renamed Fantom, and probably owned by Enoch Jacobson of Frederickstad, who sold her to Thorolf Wikborg in the very early 1920s.

When we were in Norway we met Therolf Wikborg, who is the younger son of the former owner, and he and his family entertained us at their holiday chalet at the entrance of Oslo Fjord. He showed us some old logs belonging to his father and there were also a number of photographs of the boat taken between 1920 and 1935. The main difference to the hull was the smaller cockpit (widened in 1936) and the absence of the sliding hatch on the coachroof. This was added in 1930. Originally there were double doors opening into the cabin.

Wikborg sold Fantom to Yens Hiath in 1935. By chance we met him when we were in Lingor. He was too old to come on board so we brought the boat round to his front garden so that he could see her. He said that he had owned her for one year but sold her to Henri Gutzeit in 1936 because she was too big for him to sail single handed.

Henri Gutzeit was of Norwegian birth but settled in France as a timber importer. Before he sailed her to St. Malo he had an extensive refit carried out at Oslo. It was here that the cockpit was widened and she was renamed Noreg II.

For the next few years she remained in the inner basin at St. Malo. It would appear that Gutzeit had some meals brought on board from the Hotel de l'Universe because we still have on board a bowl bearing the name of that hotel!

In 1938 Gutzeit took Noreg to England and she was on the market laid up on a mud berth at Moody's in the Hamble just before the outbreak of the second world war. Her price was said to be £800.

According to Johnny Johnson, who was running the Solent boatyard at the time, she was neglected for about two years and was even filling on the tide.

A friend of my father's, Leslie Hinton, had noticed her for sale in 1939 and had admired her lines but could not afford the price. Hinton joined the Navy and in 1942 noticed that Velsia was still at Bursledon. He wrote to the agents in whose hands she had been at the outbreak of war enquiring if she was still

10.

for sale. They replied that she was in the possession of the Custodian of Enemy Property. (St. Malo then being in German Occupation) and Hinton was invited to make an offer. He replied offering £200, which with a slight increase was accepted!

So she changed hands again and was renamed Velsia.

My father, who was also serving in the RNVR at that time, met Hinton in early 1944, and first went on board that year. During their periods of leave they maintained her waiting for hostilities to cease.

In 1950 Leslie Hinton emigrated to British Columbia where he had lived with his family as a boy. He had intended to sail Velsia to Vancouver but changed his mind. My father purchased her in 1950 and in 1951 sold two $\frac{1}{4}$ shares to Michael Braine and David Godsall. Mike Braine remained a partner for many years but latterly did not use the boat and David Godsall acquired his share about six years ago.

Having given a history of Velsia's ownership I shall now comment on her rig.

Originally she had a sail plan which was a lot larger than it is now. Her bowsprit measured 15 feet from cranse iron to stem. It is now 8 feet. The topsail spar was 30 feet long. It is now 15 feet. The height of the top of the topsail from the deck was 56 feet. It is now about 40 feet.

The foot of the mainsail was a little longer than it is now but the gaff was lower slung. Judging by how she sails now I think she could do with a bowsprit about 3 feet longer than it is at present.

In 1939 she had a very tall mast which I believe could have been the original but Therold Wikborg told me that his father had intended to convert her to bermudian rig. Fortunately he never got round to it.

When we were in Oslo we looked at all the lines plans of Colin Archer's vessels. The only ones missing were those of Vinga and Fantom! So Paul Endicott and I decided that we would take the lines of her when she was next out of the water. Fortunately the result was a drawing that resembled the real thing so our time was not wasted.

From the drawings her dimensions are as follows:-

Length O.A.	35ft 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.
Length W.L.	32ft 6in.
Beam	11ft.
Draft	6ft.
Displacement	13.27 tons
Ballast	5 tons approx.

Finally I shall give some account of her construction.

She is oak planked on larch frames. The planks are fastened to the doubled sawn frames by trenails.

The frames vary from about 4" x 4" to about 5" x 7" in the bow and stern. They are about 30" centres which is quite light construction by general building standards in Norway. Between each main frame there is a steamed skin frame $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 3" which goes to the keel. The main frames are grown forks at the base and are doubled being held with iron straps over the rest of their shape.

The deck is pine and the planks are straight laid about $3\frac{1}{2}$ " x $\frac{13}{4}$ ".

She has an oak panelled coachroof which is beginning to feel its age. It will be a sad day when it has to be rebuilt as it aroused a lot of interest in Norway for being perhaps the only surviving original yacht coachroof that Colin Archer built. Apparently all the coachroofs were of that style.

In the winter of 1980-81 we removed the copper sheathing which had been on since the 1920s and perhaps earlier. Fortunately the planking was in good order and so it was just a case of recaulking and also hammering about 14,000 beachwood sprigs into the nail holes. Since then she has been remarkably dry below the waterline.

Many of Colin Archer's workboats have needed extensive replanking which is probably due to their double skin. Fortunately Velsia has not required this having only one skin.

She first raced in the Solent Old Gaffers Race in 1960 and has since entered whenever possible. She has acquitted herself reasonably well and has won the Le Havre Plate several times. We have also put her aground at least twice during such races!

Cover photograph by Jack Coote.

COLIN ARCHER - A MEMOIR

Rescue at Havingberg by R.S. 'Colin Archer'

The fishermen on the northern coast, and especially in Finmarken, earned their bread in those days under exceedingly arduous conditions. The open Nordland-boat with her square sail was then still the prevailing type at most of these fishing stations, and though these so-called 'eight-oarers' are in many ways well suited for fishing on the Nordland and Finmark coasts, they are, as is well known, by no means safe seagoing boats. It was inevitable, therefore, that there should be great loss of life, particularly among the fleets fishing from Vardo and other winter stations.

Not seldom it would happen, when the fishermen had sailed out in fine weather of a morning to set or lift their lines that a storm off the land would suddenly burst upon them, very often with driving snow and bitter cold. Then the lines had to be abandoned, and a struggle against sea and storm begun such as can only be realized by one who has experienced it or watched it from the land. The luckiest would reach home before night closed in, freezing with cold and with boats sheeted in ice; but many were only too glad to get ashore on some small island or rock, or to take refuge in another fishing station while the storm lasted, their people at home meanwhile waiting in anguished suspense. Many, though, there were who never returned to their dear ones

after such a day of storm: they were never seen again, or were cast up dead upon the shore. Or at times it would happen that after a boat had struggled through the storm till quite near home, the sail would split or an oar break, or the men be utterly overcome with fatigue; the grapnel and kedge would be thrown out in the hope of riding out the storm, and the men would freeze to death in the boat, within sight of the guiding light that the housewife had set in the window of their home. Too often wives and mothers watched through such nights in terror, and saw the day come with despair. And there seemed to be no remedy for these things - till the 'Rescue-boat' came, bringing salvation to many.

On the 20th May, 1894, the day after the Colin Archer arrived at Vardo for the first time, a gale of hurricane force, with driving snow, set in from the north-east. As it was a Sunday, the fishing-fleet was in harbour, and at Vardo, with the breakwater to protect them, the boats were in no serious danger. But at Havningberg, the neighbouring fishing-station, about 20 miles off, things looked very bad, as the storm and the mountainous waves stood right in to the unprotected harbour. Most of the smaller boats they had managed to haul up on land; but a number of larger vessels, lying there with their crews on board, began to drag their moorings, and there was reason to fear that these might part at any moment, in which case none of those aboard could have been saved. A telegram was accordingly sent to the Prefect of the district reporting the situation, and begging that a steamer might be sent, if possible to tow the vessels out of harbour, and if not, to take off their crews.

At that time I was Harbourmaster at Vardo, and, together with the Chief of Police, who had received telegraphic orders from the Prefect, I went out to the steamers lying in harbour to endeavour to get one of them to go to Havningberg and try, if possible, to effect a rescue. But their captains, almost unanimously affirmed that this was an impossible task. Only one, Capt. Isaksen of Bodo, the commander of the bait-steamer Heimdal, declared himself willing to make the attempt.

Although we had no strong hopes that the newly arrived Rescue-boat could be of any help in this juncture, we nevertheless went aboard her, and showed her skipper the telegram. Capt. Anthonisen at once declared himself willing to sail to Havningberg and see if he could be of any help, and promptly hoisted sail and set off. Soon after, steam was made on the Heimdal, and we put forth in her from the harbour. A captain whose ship, with his wife on board, was among those lying in Havningberg harbour, came with us. But we had not got far before it became clear both to Capt. Isaksen and to the rest of us that we could not possibly render help to the vessels in Havningberg or their crews. The storm was so violent and the waves so enormous that the Heimdal could barely hold her own in the open sea, and it would have been utterly impossible to manoeuvre her amongst the breaking seas in the harbour. We decided then, after consultation, to make our way back to Vardo.

On getting back I telegraphed to Havningberg telling of our unsuccessful attempt with the Heimdal, and asking if they had seen anything of the Rescue-boat. Very soon after I received this reply: 'The Rescue-boat has taken off from the vessels in danger about 20 persons, among them Capt. Monsaas' wife, and is now on her way back to Vardo. A steamer can do nothing here, but

we beg that the Rescue-boat may be sent back, as a number of the vessels are still signalling for help.'

Thus far the Society's Secretary, and we now pass to Skipper Anthonisen's report on his proceedings:

'Sunday, 20th May (1894) Wind NE Snowstorm and thick weather, with extraordinarily heavy sea. All boats and vessels of the Vardo fishing-station in harbour. At about 5½ p.m. the harbourmaster came alongside with a telegram from Havningberg, stating that one ship and several boats had suffered total wreck, that the sea was so high it was impossible to land, and that 20 persons on vessels in the bay were in great danger; and asking that a steamer be sent to the rescue.

We made sail on the Rescue-boat and set out as quickly as possible under a press of sail, steering for Havningberg. The snowstorm was so thick that we had great difficulty in keeping our course, the distance at which the land was visible being never more than one eighth of a mile, and sometimes only a few ships' lengths. About half-past eight we sighted Havningberg. The sea was then extraordinarily heavy; we stood down towards the breakers, going as near as was possible. At the entrance to the inlet the whole sea was practically one great breaker. We then went about and put her on the port tack, with two reefs in the foresail. From here we could make out the boats and vessels lying in the harbour.

The conditions were peculiarly difficult, as there was very little sea-room, and the waves were breaking at depths of 10 to 12 fathoms. We sailed round the vessels, poured oil on the sea and manoeuvred in such a way as to get the boats into the stream of oil, which moderated the sea considerably.

We carried on in this way, backing, filling, tacking, gybing, as seemed best from time to time; and with good results, as in the course of three-quarters of an hour we took on board twenty-two souls, one of them a lady. The persons rescued were ordered below, and we thereupon sailed out past the worst of the breakers, and hove to, waiting for signals of distress from other vessels in the harbour. I may be allowed to remark here that I did not venture to lie further in among the ships and the breakers, as we had the vessel full of people, and there was a raging sea as already described. When we had lain there about a quarter of an hour looking out for signals without seeing any, we set our course back to Vardo. The snow drove thicker and the storm increased. We learnt after that the other vessels too had distress signals hoisted, but we could not see them.

At the mouth of Porsfjord a sea broke over us that would undoubtedly have buried us all if the vessel had not been as solid and seaworthy as she is. The whole of her after-part was completely under water, and the praam we carried was smashed; but otherwise there was no damage. We were, I may remark, under suitably reefed-down canvas. At midnight we reached Vardo and landed all our passengers safely.

On our arrival we found telegraphic orders from the scene of the disaster directing us to return as quickly as possible. We went out again at once. The storm was then abating, but the sea was still exceedingly heavy. We reached Havningberg again at 3.20 a.m.

and by manoeuvring in the same way as before, succeeded in picking up fourteen more people. We then once more laid our course for Vardo. About 10 a.m. we arrived at Vardo, and put the people ashore. Thereafter we moored the vessel and turned in, as there were no more boats at sea.

There is much enthusiasm here over our work. Numbers of people are visiting and inspecting the vessel. It is considered noteworthy that the steamer Heimdal attempted to come to Havningberg to render assistance, but was forced by the storm to turn back. She could not manage it. The Harbourmaster himself was on board of her.

Vardo, 22nd May, 1894. '

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 1984 Annual General Meeting of the Association will be held at the Cruising Association Rooms, St. Katherine's Dock, London, at 5 p.m. PROMPT on Saturday, 14th January 1984.

Would all Committee members please note that the Annual General Meeting will be preceded by a Committee Meeting in the Cruising Association Rooms at 2 p.m. sharp. If any Area Secretaries are unable to attend, would they PLEASE arrange for a member of their Area Committee to deputise for them, and advise the Association Secretary who will be their deputy.

The Agenda for the A.G.M. will be:

- President's address
- Secretary's report
- Treasurer's report
- Presentation of awards for newsletter articles.

The business meeting will be followed by a social evening, with possibly a film or slide show, etc.

After the social evening, a number of members usually gather for a late and convivial dinner together, and it is hoped that this will occur again this year.

Members who travel any distance to the meeting are advised to check locally on British Rail's 'Highlife' weekends, and other similar offers. From Scotland, the cost of one of these weekends is less than the normal rail fare (1st class) and it includes two nights at the (very comfortable) Tower Hotel - ideally situated for attending the meeting and dinner afterwards.

SOLENT AREA

THE AREA A.G.M. will be held on Saturday 25th February 1984 at The Jolly Sailor, Lands End Road, Bursledon, Hants, at 6.30 p.m. in the Foreshore Bar and will be followed by a SOCIAL EVENING. Traditional ales and bar food will be available. The usual slide competition will not be held this year (save them up for next year) but instead Nick Skeates will show slides of his voyage to New Zealand, the loss of Wylo, the building of Wylo II, and the return voyage. It would

be a help if those attending would let the Area Hon. Sec. know in advance so that an estimate of numbers can be made. Ample parking is available in Bursledon Station car park, about 3 minutes' walk away, and directions can be given if needed.

A SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING of the Solent Area was held at the Portchester Sailing Club on Saturday 12th November. The Treasurer presented the accounts for the year ending 31st October 1983, which showed a closing balance of £130. There were however a number of firms who had not paid for the advertising in the Race Programme apart from which it seemed likely that the financial position would have been slightly improved despite the additional expenses incurred due to the postponement of the Race by bad weather. It was agreed that a slightly larger balance would be desirable as 'working capital' and that efforts should be made to increase the balance next year to £250. The adoption of the accounts was proposed by David Cade, seconded by Derek Godfrey and passed unanimously.

SYNTHETIC HEMP ROPES I am indebted to Nick Skeates for drawing my attention to traditional looking polyester ropes which appeared for the first time at the Southampton Boat Show. For some years traditional looking ropes such as Hempex, Synthihemp and Polyhemp have been available but these are polypropylene based which does not have the same initial strength as polyester and moreover degrades much more rapidly in ultraviolet light. While this is not a severe problem in the average English summer, it can lead to a loss of half the strength of the rope within two years in sunnier climates. The new polyester type of which I have just received a supply seems excellent and is available in natural 'hemp' or dark brown 'tarred hemp' colour in sizes from 6mm to 16mm. Samples and prices from Jimmy Green Marine, The Coachyard, Berry Hill, Beer, Devon.

CLYDE NEWS

Following the last issue of the Newsletter I am disappointed to have to say that only one person, and at that a new member, has offered to help organise the Clyde Area events.

This plea for help was brought about by two factors:

1. That it has become more and more obvious that, while the RNCYC would help with the running of our annual race it was not really the easiest thing for them to fit into their busy programme.
2. That I wish to retire from the post as area secretary for business and personal reasons.

As a result I have already spoken to several members and the general opinion was in favour of doing something on our own - however, this appears not to have been supported in reality but, rather than allow the annual event to fade into non-existence which it would if nobody organised the race, even with outside help, I have decided it is best for the Clyde area of the O.G.A. at least for 1984 if we dispense with the race as we have known it and have a 'muster' at Woodfarm Rock (Southern end) on the evening of Saturday 24th June which would simply be a gathering of all those interested in i) talking about our future annual events, what they should be and how they can best be organised,

ii) meeting other gaffers to enjoy a quiet evening over an informal camp fire and a drink. As I shall not send any further letters in this connection I have suggested a reminder of this date is posted in the spring Newsletter and also take this opportunity to say that all food and drink should be provided by individuals attending the muster - there will be nothing 'laid on'.

Finally, as food for thought, may I suggest one variation that might be more enjoyable and more practical for this style of weekend (because it enables all boats including those moored in Loch Fyne and the lower reaches of the Clyde that cannot normally make the start of the traditional race). A race of some sort, perhaps starting at anchor as they used to at Cowes in the last century, going from the Narrows past Tighnabruaich round Ardlamont Buoy and back going through the narrows and perhaps finishing at anchor at Woodfarm Rock keeping administration to the minimum, or started and finished by those ashore.

Think about it and bring your ideas and suggestions to Woodfarm Rock next year. It is up to each one of us to keep it going - until someone wants to take on secretaryship and organise something more specific.

In the meantime let us keep this date (the last weekend in June) and same place each year.

Philip Pendred.

ST. MALO - QUEBEC Tall Ships Race next year starts APRIL 15th. Events for non-participants are being organised, in particular a race St. Malo to Guernsey and possible Guernsey - Le Havre. We realise few British gaffers are in commission in April, but for any that can make it we promise a welcome that will justify a cold Channel crossing. Fuller details when available.

Jon Ward-Hayne.

1984 GRENAA REGATTA The Regatta Committee in Grenaa has the pleasure to invite you to the Grenaa Regatta from 8/6 - 11/6/1984.

The purpose of the regatta is to gather small and large sailing ships of different nationalities to a festive gathering in an extrovert harbour, where citizens and tourists get the pleasure of experiencing the beautiful ships to promote the interest in sailing ships.

We offer you: free berth and drinking water, participation in different arrangements like receptions, excursions etc.

We can inform you that the Association of Wooden Ships holds its yearly general meeting in connexion with the Regatta, which, in itself, results in 60 - 70 ships as participants. We hope for many notifications from your association and say 'See you later' to a festive Regatta meeting in Denmark.

We ask you to send notice with statement of the length, width, sounding, rigging and number of crew members, to the

Regatta Committee, Grenaa Tourist Bureau, Postbox 33,
Torvet 1, 8500 Grenaa, Denmark. Tel: 01045 6 32 17 33.

Note: GRENAA is on the tip of the Djursland peninsula, facing the Kattegat. Among other attractions, the area has a number of ancient castles and museums, including a fishing museum. A publicity leaflet also mentions inns, bars and restaurants with dancing as well as discos and a night club.

BRIGHTON MARINA O.G.A. Rally & Races, 1984.

The 1984 event will be held from Friday 27th to Monday 30th July, inclusive. As this year, the big Race will be on Saturday 28th and the Fun Race on Sunday 29th July.

Valerie M. Gardner, Brighton Marina, Tel: (0273)693636.

PORS BEAC'H '84. This will be a really superb event. I went to the French Old Gaffers Rassemblement in 1980 and some of this was organised by the Groupe Finisterren de Croisiere - they really know how to put on a good do. A yard team from Bergen are coming over to build an Oselvar in Viking fashion and the sculling races, games, etc. will be fast and furious in the best French tradition. Have you ever tasted fresh sardine grilled over a fire and popped into half a 'baguette' split down the middle and liberally buttered? That is a gustatory experience you cannot miss. I will be there and several British boats are already making plans. Jolie Brise, Biche and Galway hookers have been written to. I have a stock of the splendidly produced brochures and will be delighted to send one, on receipt of S.A.E., and handle any correspondence in French or English either way. Date: 8th - 12th August, 1984. Julian Burn, 8 Belmont Terrace, Totnes, Devon. (0803)863878.

A 'GEM' OF A SAIL

This year, on the invitation of our near neighbour, Mike Taylor, we put aside thoughts of sailing 'Peggy-H' in the Solent Race and joined him in his boat, as crew.

First, a word about the boat. Gem is an original Itchen Ferry Smack, whose year of construction is not certain, but Mike has traced her back some way through past owners. More history keeps coming to light and I expect he'll advise the Association as he gets nearer to her year of build.

He found her being used as the rubbish-skip in a corner of Dyers' boat yard, up the Itchen. There wasn't a great deal left over in the way of garboards, keel, transom, rudder, deck and many other essential bits. A lot of the frames and floors looked a bit sorry also.

However, he 'acquired' this wreckage, borrowed the neighbouring farmer's tractor and trailer, humped it on to it (the trailer, that is) and finally arrived at the same farmer's barn with it and proceeded to rebuild it, for that is the only way it can be described.

A lot of the timber came from local areas where trees had been felled for either firewood or fencing, and, as these were mostly oak, Mike kept the appropriate shaped crooks (when he himself was employed logging) and then later fashioned them into frames, floors, etc. in the time-honoured manner.

All the spars came from the same sources, and he has made them to the dimensions on the drawing in Edgar March's 'Sail and Oar', and altogether she looks, to my eyes and I suppose many others, just how an Itchen Ferry ought to look. Not only is the rig very pleasing but the whole boat is also, because he has kept her looking like she would have originally and not torted her up into something 'yachty'. A proper little working boat, the the image is added to by the fact that her only means of propulsion, when not sailing, is provided by 'two armpower' on the end of a sweep, by the owner --- or his crew!

All the sails have been made (from other sails) by Mike and his palm and needle - I saw him doing it, with the mainsail spread all over his living room, so I know it's true.

One can only have the greatest of admiration for all this, particularly so, since she put up such a fine performance in the Solent Race this year, which I'll now attempt an account of.

We arrived at Osborne Bay not quite knowing how Gem would perform on the wind. We thought we were too late (in fact we weren't) nobody had a watch, but we asked somebody, and found we could then do a bit of manoeuvring to see what happened.

On the wind she seemed to have far too much up front, so we changed down to a smaller jib (of peculiar shape) and the little boat fairly bounced over the seas.

I noticed that it was much easier to get Gem into a good starting position than it ever is with Peggy-H. No doubt the size has a lot to do with this, but also the all round visibility that you get from an open boat must help a lot, and it is very desirable when bowsprits are coming at you from all directions.

However - the start - and Paul Johnson's Venus was off like a long dog. We soon found though, that we weren't far behind and as we tacked down to Salt Mead, we seemed to be leaving far bigger boats in our wake.

'Something very special about this little fellow', I said to Mike, and I noticed that the grin on his face disappeared up into his woolly hat! Margy (my wife) did all the steering, as she usually does on Peggy-H. She has very good concentration and gets the feel of a strange boat very quickly.

We were second boat round at Salt Mead, which, for such a tiddler of a boat on a long windward leg was nothing short of remarkable, and defied all the laws of waterline length, etc.

Here we made our mistake of the day. No, we made it earlier on, by not bringing along any 'downwind' sails that we could have purloined from some of my own collection! We got quite complacent, let the sails out which we had (which was only of the working variety), opened the coffee flasks and the 'goodie' boxes, and then sat back and watched all the boats behind us breaking out spinnakers and other forms of downwind kites, and then we saw quite a lot of these boats get bigger and some were soon past us.

Our second mistake was to stay out in the main tide, rather than tuck back in on the Island shore, and we lost a lot of places from that manoeuvre - even if we gained a lot of sandwiches!

The last 'up and down twice' leg was good to us and Gem regained some of her lost placings. She seems to be remarkably fast when on the wind, and lives up well to all that has been said about 'them liffile Southampton Smacks'.

We couldn't sail up to the Elephant yard as Margy was working on the Sunday and we thought it would be a bit chancy anyway, to come back with the awful forecast for that day in an open boat. So, after the finish we had a fine sail back to Cowes, and the little Gem fair flew along, on the wind again until off West Bramble.

That evening was spent near to the telephone and we rang up Tom Richardson at the Elephant Yard from time to time. We thought perhaps we'd won something, but when we heard we'd won the Channel Cup, I'm afraid Mike's home-made wine took a severe thrashing.

I really felt so pleased for Mike who has worked so hard on that little boat, to be able to do so well without even having the boat tuned up. With some good setting headsails and an off the wind 'whopper' or two (and perhaps a topsail) I think she'll be a formidable flyer in future events. 'Twill be nice to see!

Ron Crick.

MAID OF ESSEX (1160) 20' x 18'6" x 6'6".

As a very new member of the O.G.A. I wonder whether I can appeal to your readership for any information regarding the history of my gaff rigged 20 foot centreboard sloop. I first saw her at a boatyard in Maldon, Essex, at the beginning of this year where, in spite of her rather dilapidated condition I fell in love with her lines and rig. Now with help from fellow villagers George and Brenda Jago, she has been restored to something like her past glory and although she still needs a lot of work doing we are already thinking of 1984's O.G.A. race.

My problem is that the yard where I purchased her has been most unhelpful in tracing her past and apart from saying that she was previously named 'Pegasus', with a yellow hull and mahogany upper-works I know nothing of her. My own guess is that she is 30/40 years old and was once an open boat but other than that I would welcome any information any of your readers can offer.

Phil Slade, Glendower Cottage, Ferry Road, North Fambridge, Essex.

BOOK REVIEW: THE TOMINTOUL HANDBOOK OF YACHTS AND YACHT BUILDING
Published by the Joe King Press to coincide with the opening of the Tomintoul deep water marina (all facilities provided).

Like many so-called handbooks, which often need two hands to lift, this is a large volume, possibly falling into the category of 'coffee table books', although in view of the nature of its contents perhaps 'chart table book' might be a better description.

The handbook is multiauthored, and naturally the style of writing, the quality and quantity of the line drawings and the photographs vary from chapter to chapter. The diversity of the subjects covered should provide something to cover all tastes of O.G.A. members.

The first chapter, entitled 'The joys of yacht cruising', by I.C. Newports is perhaps somewhat pedestrian in its style and range, and the second chapter on 'Successful yacht racing on a low budget', by Peter Le Savoury is more likely to appeal to owners of one design or restricted classes than to O.G.A. members. However, the appendix to this chapter by Bond makes good reading.

For most owners of old gaffers, the real interest starts in Chapter Three, 'Traditional hull construction methods', by T. Connoke. The general style of this chapter is somewhat ponderous and heavy, but the next chapter is much lighter in style, being a well rounded treatise on lightweight hull forms by the well known boat builder Ben Tribbs.

The multinational nature of the handbook is well demonstrated by the transatlantic chapter by Gar. Budds on 'Hull planking', and the portion of the book on traditional hulls is nicely filled out by Cora King's contribution on 'Leak prevention and seam filling'.

The third major section of this handbook deals with more modern methods of hull construction, linked to the second section by a chapter on 'Strong glues and resins' by E. Pocksies, which is followed by a well compiled piece by Polly Esther on moulded hull resins.

The comprehensive nature of the handbook, and the lack of male chauvinism in the choice of authors is demonstrated by May Nandhead's writing on 'Sail design', which is admirably complemented by a chapter on 'Modern sail materials' by Terry Lean.

An unusual and interesting chapter is Dave Itt's material on 'Stowing a rigid dinghy aboard', and this leads nicely into 'Sheet and anchor winches' by Paul L. Holdem. The importance of a well fed crew is discussed by Stu. Potts in his 'Galley hints and tips', although some readers may not be fully in agreement with some of the recipes Stu suggests.

The importance of the maintenance of traditional skills, and of training in the boatbuilding industry is well aired in the final chapter 'Boatbuilding apprenticeships' by the well known traditionalist from Long Island, N.Y., Ed. U. Kayshun.

All in all this should be a book well suited to the tastes of O.G.A. members, and those who can persuade their wives to buy them a copy for Christmas should enjoy some pleasant evenings reading it.

This review was submitted by our Lecht Area correspondent,
Iain McLott.

DAVEY & COMPANY I am taking this opportunity to write to you with details of a recent meeting I had with Davey & Company during the British Marine Trade Exhibition.

I visited their stand out of interest as I have used one of the old Davey oil anchor lights during the past couple of seasons and found that it is extremely effective. I was interested to find out that they have now started to make this old style anchor light, complete with inner glass storm cone, again. They have

agreed that should members of the Old Gaffers Association wish to purchase these they would be only too happy to supply them. However, they said that they would prefer only to deal in reasonable size orders - they suggest 5 - 10 lamps per time.

I am happy to place group orders on behalf of the Association and Davey have agreed that we can include other items within the catalogue. Their catalogue is a gold mine from an Old Gaffer's point of view, featuring such items as the Wykeham Martin roller reefing in various sizes up to 20 tons. They also have an extensive range of brass and gun metal fittings including hinges, door locks, door handles, wooden spinnaker poles, fittings.

Any members who would like to buy Davey fittings etc., or who wish to know more about what is available should contact:
John Osborne, The Old School House, Albury, Surrey GU5 9AD.
Tel: Shere 3582.

ADVERTISEMENTS

FOR SALE

DORANA (734) 35' x 12' x 3'6". Bawley, built 1939 at Tollesbury. In last 5 years has had all but a full rebuild, new spars, sails, BMC engine (2.5 diesel). Last winter over £6,000 was spent on the boat at Mashfords in Plymouth. Well equipped, even to a VHF radio, boat is at present laid up on the Tamar at Plymouth. Many goodies to go with the boat. £9,750.
Malcolm Wood, Holly Grove, Holly Lane, Pilley, Nr. Lymington, Hants.
Tel: Lymington 72456.

REALT (492) 5½ tons TM. Gaff Sloop. 25' x 8' x 5'. Built Tyrrell of Arklow, 1927. Carvel construction pitch pine on oak. Cast iron keel. White terylene sails, main & jib, plus spares. 8 hp Stuart Turner P55 MR inboard engine (petrol). 3 berths, Waterloo (fitted), butane cooker & stainless steel sink, fresh water container.
Inventory includes: anchor plus chain, boat hook, fenders, nav. lights, fire extinguisher, flares, Walkers log, echo sounder (damaged), barometer, clock, radar reflector, compass.
Bracket fitting for outboard. 9 hp Johnson also available.
Inflatable complete with 3/4 hp Evinrude plus drop keel board, mast and sails for fun sailing - can be used as dinghy.
Presently lying at Puerto Pollensa, Majorca. For those who don't know, from leaving a British Airport 4/5 hours, including airport clearance time, will find you in Pollensa.
Mooring fees are cheap compared to the English coastline, the equivalent of £2 per week, offshore on a secure mooring adjacent to the harbour & services. Could be interesting to a syndicate or group for time-sharing. Local maintenance can be arranged.
Surely a good buy at £3,250.
C.A. Cryer, 5 The Highway, Sutton, Surrey. Tel: 01 642 1079.

LIZZIE TONKIN (1108) Memory Class gaff smack (GRP) 19' LWL, 24'10" LOA. Open boat with 2 berth cuddy. Seagull Longshaft, together with Stuart P5 2 stroke (overhauled but needs shipping) All gear for longshore cruising including boom tent. Built in 1977. Raced & cruised in Solent (2nd GRP boat in 1982 OGA race). Owner going abroad. Boat lying ashore Fawley, Soton. £2,200 o.n.o.
P. Mockford, 25 Mercury Gardens, Hamble, Hants. Tel: 0703 45 3895.

BOLD HAMSTER (198) One of John Leather's New Blossom Class, built 1965 at Ian Brown's Rowhedge. 19'1½" x 17'9" x 6'11" x 2'3" (plate up). 2 berths. No engine. full inventory includes pram dinghy & winter cover. Lying Wivenhoe. £2,800 o.n.o.
P.J.M. Bollen, 45 Cornard Road, Sudbury, Suffolk. Tel: Sudbury 77932

SEAWAYS LEISURE VENTURE CLUB. POOLE - BOURNEMOUTH.

The famous large gaff Breton Sailing ship 'BICHE'

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Colour brochure, pictures, details, from:

9 Blackstone Road, Tel: 0491 35531

Wallingford, Oxon. OX10 8JR 0235 25998

LOUISE (399) Gaff cutter, 4½ tons. 24' x 8' x 4½'. Modern version of Solent Smack in GRP. foam sandwich. Built 1972, Dover Yacht Co, one-off. Traditionally rigged sails by Goldfinch. Diesel, 10hp Fareymann. Inflatable, liferaft, rigid dinghy. Full inventory. Laid up 30/9/83, Mashfords, Cremyll. Must sell, due to age. £3,500.

Dr. C.G. Hunter, 52 Fort Picklecombe, Torpoint, Cornwall.

Tel: Plymouth 82319.

CORNISH GALATHEA (874) Gaff cutter. 30' x 24' x 20'3" x 8' x 2'5", (plate up) 4'8" (plate down)

Old men come & tap the hull & say how nice to see a traditional wooden boat. Well found Cornish Crabber, built 1977.

She has 305 sq. ft. tan terylene, (jib, staysail, topsail, main), spruce spars, marine ply deck, timber cockpit, and saloon but a fibre glass hull (shows how wrong the old men were) but is otherwise a nice traditional seaworthy little craft. 8 hp diesel, VHF, RDF, Stowe log, echo sounder, Taylor cooker with oven, electric & oil lighting, fisherman & Danforth anchors, inflatable, etc. Lying Solent £6,500 to £7,000 depending on how much equipment.

David Cornish, 8 Meadow Close, Thatcham, Berks. Thatcham 68223.

IMOGEN (EX IMOGEN II) (1066) Gaff yawl. Designed Albert Strange, Built Luke & Co of Hamble, 1911. 26' overall, excl. bowsprit & bumpkin. New sails 1981, in excellent condition. Survey March 1983, all recommendations (very little) carried out. Diesel engine (Coventry Victor WD3 1956) in VG condition. 3 berths & pipe cot fwd. Gas or paraffin cooker. 4' draft.

Liferaft, VHF & all gear for serious cruising. New spars in 1981 & all rigging renewed then. New battery & sheets for genoa in 1983. Varnished 9' pram dinghy, fits on coach roof. Winter cover & strongback also incl. 4 wheel trailer rust proofed & repainted 1982. All teak interior, bar modern portions, e.g. engine box.

Lined cabin in T&G boards. £10,000 o.n.o.

J. Channer, The Old Barn, Dacombe, Newton Abbot, Devon.

Tel: Torquay 39529.

OYSTER BOAT. Falmouth type, 28 ft. Gaff rigged, Petters water cooled diesel engine, glass fibre hull. £4,000.

M.J. Taylor, 1 Chawton Cottages, Church Lane, Northwood, I.O.W.

Tel: Cowes, I.O.W. 297430.

IANTHE (1013) 21 ft. centreboard three-quarter decked sloop. Believed to have been built in the 1880s by Inmans yard (now Berthon boatyard) at Lymington. The boat has wintered in the same shed which was built for her (and her sisters) since 1913 at Christchurch. Professionally maintained all her life. Excellent condition & is sold with mainsail, 3 headsails, leg of mutton spinnaker, jackyard topsail, seagull outboard, sweeps & stem clinker dinghy. Performance remarkable. In 3 OGA races she has 2 firsts & a second. Beautiful boat that will last for very many years to come. £1,500 no haggling.
George Mooney, c/o Castle Street, Portchester, Fareham, Hants
Tel: Christchurch 476550.

4 OARED ROWING/SAILING GIG 19 ft. clinker with gunter sloop rig. 1 good suit sails, one tatty suit. 4 sweeps. All teak constn. New stainless steel rigging, buoyancy tanks. Ideal club boat or scouts. Sound but requires repainting £350.
Spence Mooney Cosham 384589.

PEGGY H (127) Gaff cutter, ex-hooker, converted Priors of Burnham 1936. 32' x 10'6" x 5'. All good tan terylene sails (main nearly new). New stainless standing rigging. Some new braided running rigging, all of which is synthetic. Owner has lived aboard for many years with wife. Calor cooking, oven, grill, two-burner. Bogey coal or wood stove. 2 single, 1 double berths. Baby Blake toilet in forecastle. Thornycroft pet (or per) Handybilly engine. Perkins 4108 with 2 to 1 hydraulic box avail. (not fitted) by negotiation. Very roomy, comfortable, well-maintained sailing 'home'. £10,000 o.n.o.
Ron Crick, 'Peggy H', c/o Werrar Farm Cottage, Stag Lane, Newport, Isle of Wight.

MERLIN (463) Gaff cutter. 33' LOA (not incl. bowsprit - 10'). Built Aldous, Brightlingsea, 1896. Stem, apron, fore-deadwood & some frames replaced professionally 1982. Needs work to finish. Lying St. Osyth boatyard. £2,000, all offers considered.
D. Childs, 78 Tower Street, Brightlingsea, Essex.

VIXEN (813) 17' half decker, Gunter rig with bowsprit. In 1937 Uffa Fox was commissioned to design a boat suitable for estuary and coastal sailing. He produced Vixen, to be light in weight and easily handled for beaching. Built in Dublin 1938, she made several long voyages being transported by steamer to the West Coast of Scotland and to Southampton. Large storage area below foredeck for camping equipment & use of cockpit tent allows 2 people to sleep on board. Hull & deck have been completely restored over last 3 years using the West epoxy resin saturation technique and is now completely impervious to the ingress of water. Galvanised steel centre plate operated by Chinese windlass. Tanned cotton mainsail, roller reefing genoa & ghoster plus larger mainsail & light weight spars for use in light airs. Light weight hull & style of rigging make this boat an ideal trailer sailer. £750.
A.B. Adams, The Nook, South Street, Litlington, Royston, Herts.
Tel: (0763) 852479.

26' MAHOGANY carvel built centreboard cruiser. No rig at present but when designed around the turn of the century had gaff rig. Requires much work in restoration & hull is in very good condition for its age. Cabin & coach roof still on but need renewing to same design. I have managed with the help of the National

Maritime Museum and the German Maritime Museum to trace origin of boat. Built in Western Baltic region probably Kiel. National Maritime Museum have shown considerable interest in the craft & they stress that it is important to do the restoration properly, so you can see this is a project for the enthusiast. I have not the time to do this properly, therefore would like to sell her to someone who could.

Stephen Street, 79 Appley Lane South, Appley Bridge, Wigan, Lance.
Tel: (02575) 2133

TARANTELLA (1243) Cornish Crabber gaff cutter (1979 Boat Show exhibit). Would you like a very pretty gaffer in excellent order (all varnishing already done and ready to launch in the spring). We cannot all manage the time & money of a genuine old wood gaffer, but you could have this lovely GRP boat! She sails beautifully & has many extras inc: 11 hp diesel inboard engine, Sealine full marine R/T, Seafarer 3 echosounder, brass clock, barometer, gim-balled brass paraffin light (full electric light also), Optimus 2 burner paraffin stove, stainless steel sink seacock, 2 fire extinguishers, 25lb fisherman anchor, cockpit tent w. windows & zipped doorways, mainsail cover, canvas overwintering cover. Sails: Jib, staysail new 1983, main, topsail, jackyard topsail.

£7,950

Also available Bamber Toprider road trailer, excellent order, never immersed. £850.

G.H. Honey, Aldix Copse Farm, Isington, Alton, Hants.

Tel: (0420) 22239.

Now, our usual welcome to the following NEW MEMBERS:

M. BECKETT, 43 Archway Street, Barnes, London SW13.

Bonita 26

N.L. BELLATTI, 46 Crowthers Hill, Dartmouth, Devon.

Margaret Jean 1170

R.D.E. CARDY, 92 Mill Road, Maldon, Essex.

Ida 43

J.J. CLAY, Saxon House, 83 Ipswich Road, Woodbridge IP12 4BT,
Suffolk.

Firefly 785

J.H. COOTE, The Towans, Hall Road, Rochford, Essex.

B. GREEN, 14 North Road, Whittlesford, Cambs. CB2 4NZ.

Jubilee 14

A.E. HIDDEN, 4 Malone View Avenue, Belfast BT9 5PJ.

Mantis 1314

J. LAWRENCE, Sail Loft, 22-28 Tower Street, Brightlingsea, Essex.

Helen & Violet 1262

C.R. MANSFIELD, Copperhill Terrace, 10-12 Satchell Lane, Hamble,
Southampton, Hants. SO3 5HE.

F.D. MARCHANT, P.O. Box 111, Claremont, Western Australia 6010.

J. MILLAR, 110 Upper Richmond Road West, London SW14.

Snowgoose 1172

P.O. SIMING, Orngatan 11, S - 216 17 Malmo, Sweden.

P.J. SLADE, Glendower Cottage, Ferry Road, North Fambridge, Essex.

Maid of Essex 1160

P.D. SLATER, Timminoggy, Boscawen Road, Falmouth, Cornwall.

Rebecca 1224.

The following members have changed their addresses:

J.N.A. BENNETT, Staddlestones, Lymington Road, East End, Lymington,
SO4 8SS April 161

M.R. BURN, Tudor Cottage, The Street, Tuddenham St. Martin, Ipswich,
Suffolk. Sheka 877

R.P. COLE, c/o 264 Upper, Deacon Road, Bitterne, Southampton.

R.L. CUNDALL, Rayleigh, Newport Road, Northwood, I.O.W.

R. ELLIOT-PYLE, Heath Cottage, Mountfield, Robertsbridge, Sussex.
Dayspring 1339

D.S. HUNT, 5 Woodrolfe Park Flats, Tollesbury, Essex CM9 8TB.
William & Emily 212

D.I. KILPATRICK, Maynard, 12 New Abbey Road, Dumfries DG2 7NA.
Tringa 1065

D.J. KNIGHT, Pippins Farm, Stonecourt Lane, Pembury, Tunbridge
Wells, Kent TN2 4AB. Speedwell 547

J.A.W. MARTIN, Gatehouse, Mashbury, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 4TG.

D. PEDERSON, 19 Ellingfort Road, Hackney, London E.8.
Alan 147

M.D. TUCK, Gaff House, Walton Lane, Bosham, Sussex.
Vital Spark 1690

M. WOOD, Holly Grove, Holly Lane, Pilley, Lymington, Hants.
Dorana 734

P.M. GOODHAND, 3 Greenfields Estate, St. Albert, Alberta,
Canada. t8N 2G2 Gweneth 690

A. NURNBERG, Carl-Petersen Str. 119, 2000 Hamburg 26, Germany.

D.A. TANNER, 36 Urquhart Street, Queenstown, Tasmania 7467.
Ayesha 182

E.B. WATSON, 260 Elm Street, Noank, Connecticut 06340, U.S.A.

EAST COAST AREA

The Area Annual General Meeting was held on 19th November 1983.

Diary dates for 1984:

East Coast O.G. Race	21st July
Swale Gaffers	4th August
London River Smack Race	25th August
River Stour Rally & Race	25th - 27th August
Colne Smack Race	29th September
West Mersea Regatta, including:	13th - 18th August
West Mersea Smack Race	18th August.

It was suggested that members use the winter to find data on their boats and let the Area Secretary have it, whether or not they enter the race next year. Such information can then be filed for later use.

George and Brenda Jago presented a video film of the race, taken by Anglia Television. This was an unedited version of the televised programme and had many revealing shots. This video is now the property of the Association.

Thanks were given to Brenda Jago for her great work in publicity.

THE VIKING TRADER

Britain first came under the influence of the Vikings about 1,100 years ago and even today evidence of that influence manifests itself in all sorts of ways. In the maritime world it surfaces most obviously in the lovely skiffs of the Shetland Isles, the Humber keel and the cobbles of the North East of England. The skiffs and cobbles particularly reflect their origins in their shape and construction techniques and the keel in its rig.

Much research has been done into the qualities of the Viking vessels themselves and several replicas have been built over the years. These replicas have several times made trans-Atlantic crossings and revealed great sea keeping abilities. But all have been based on the warships and ceremonial craft found such as the Gokstad and Oseberg ships. No one until last year had tried to build a replica of a Viking cargo ship but now such a vessel exists and she is to be used to demonstrate the ability of the type. Called a 'Knarr', this is the type of vessel that bore Leif Eriksson to North America.

It has been possible to build such a vessel because a fairly well preserved knarr hull was found at Roskilde in Denmark. The hull is one of a group of block ships found at the entrance of the fjord deliberately sunk to protect Roskilde from any sea borne invasion perhaps between 1000 and 1050 AD. Known as Skuldelev Wreck No 1, it is now housed in the museum there.

The driving ambitions of a young Norwegian explorer called Ragnar Thorseth are behind the construction of the replica. 35-year-old Thorseth has made expeditions to Greenland (1977) and traversed the North West Passage between 1979 and 1980 to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Roald Amundsen's first voyage there. He had long wondered about the possibility of sailing a knarr in Eriksson's footsteps.

Construction of the Saga Siglar began last summer after a fund raising drive and the project 'Operation Viking' was born. The vessel's keel was laid in October using Danish oak for the keel, stems and some frames. The rest of the hull is close grained Norwegian pine. The hull is clinker built and all rivets are soft iron. Extensive use is also made of treenails especially to fasten the planking to the frames. It was constructed in a Norwegian boatyard 5 miles inland up a valley called Bjorkedalen. Seagoing vessels have apparently been built there since 986AD because excellent timber stocks are locally available. 'Green' timber was used as it possesses great flexibility. This is normal Scandinavian practice when constructing such craft.

Rigged with a single square sail and with absolutely authentic sailing gear the vessel looks completely traditional. However a closer inspection brings the onlooker straight back into the 20th Century for this Viking vessel has an engine and also an up to date communications package.

The engine is a 22 hp twin cylinder Saab diesel. Its installation is fairly conventional and it is fitted along the centre line of the hull with the shaft set through the stern stem. An extra steel 'deadwood' is fitted outside the stem to carry the shaft a little distance out from the stem face. It serves to strengthen the stem itself and also ensures that the propeller is

clear of turbulence. This engine has a working speed of 1,700 rpm and drives a 60 cm two bladed variable pitch propellor capable of being locked in line when not in use. Sabb developed this engine for use in lifeboats and it is normally fitted with a top breather which self seals in the event of a capsize. This means that restarting is possible after recovery.

The hull is completely open though it does have a loose boarded half deck at either end. The crew sleep in a canvas cuddy so life is led at a basic level! Several tons of large rounded beach stones are carried for ballast and Saga Siglar weighs in at well over 20 tons in sea going trim.

Crewed by eight persons the Saga Siglar is now engaged in a tour of Europe and at the time of writing the first leg of the tour was well under way with Aberdeen as the first British port of call. Due into London some time in July the vessel will then go on to France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and back to Norway. On passage speeds of up to 9 knots had been recorded, and, lying in Aberdeen, the Siglar was an incredible contrast to the oil rig vessels berthed there.

In 1984 the Saga Siglar will set out on a Round the World voyage. At first she will follow the Viking route to America but then Ragnar Thorset will take the vessel far beyond the Viking reach and visit islands such as the Marquesas, Tahiti, Fiji, Indonesia and many other places! All just to show it can be done in such a vessel.

Heavy with the scent of Stockholm tar on her rigging the Saga looks a sturdy confident ship which was reinforced when I was invited to step aboard. This is no ship full of hairy Vikings bent on rape and pillage with the Hollywood striped sail, shields of battle and so on. Instead a ship of trade with few oars, a small crew, few shields and weapons and a lot of confidence is what she is. There is no doubt that she will make it to the States next year and the rest of the way too.

But Saga Siglar is not the only vessel in the expedition. On the European tour Ragnar Thorseth's own vessel, Strandholm is in attendance. She is a venerable old lady of 1938 vintage. In contrast to modern craft she is like a fine wine, a vessel of great but simple character and of very high quality.

Strandholm started life as a 45 ft fishing boat. Of typical Norwegian smack style she has a plumb stem, sweeping sheer and nicely proportioned elliptical counter. She spent her fishing days ranging the North Atlantic, the Greenland coast, the North Sea and Arctic waters in search mainly of cod. When built she was equipped with a heavy auxiliary sailing rig (ketch) and relied for main propulsion upon a Heimdal diesel of 70 hp driving a variable pitch propellor. This powerplant remained throughout her entire fishing career until 1977 when Ragnar bought her. In 1958 she was lengthened to some 58 ft., an operation carried out on many of this type.

In 1977 Ragnar Thorseth started to convert her for a new role and the hold became accommodation, fisherman style, to accommodate many more persons than the old lady had been used to. The old

accommodation has been retained. With a stout auxiliary rig she has made a crossing to Greenland under Ragnar. He re-engined with a 138 hp 2700 series Ford Diesel, still keeping the variable pitch system. Then it was decided to replace the old style piled up type of wheelhouse these craft used to have perched right at the stern. In April/May of this year it was replaced by a new longer and lower steel wheelhouse which is still in keeping with the hull shape. At the same time the engine room and hold casings were replaced in steel too. The styling is quiet and functional.

Like the Saga Siglar this pine on oak vessel is oiled. She has been oiled since built and I well remember such craft coming into Aberdeen in the 1960s with their oiled hulls, powerful rigs, white wheelhouses and bulwarks and the inevitable ker-thunk of their slow running jdry exhaust semi-diesels. So Stradholm is to me a real memory jogger.

Now she is acting as wet nurse and general bunk house for the expedition crew, especially when in port. If the speeds reached by the Saga coming across the North Sea are anything to go on the Strandholm must have a hard job keeping up with her charge. She carries sufficient bunkers to cross the Atlantic but at present she is only involved with the European section of the voyage.

Saga Siglar means Saga Sailer and it looks very much as if she will follow the routes of the sagas for some years to come. It is hoped that total success will be achieved and that this apparently well managed and thoroughly sponsored expedition will not hit the snags, especially financial ones which have crippled many an expedition over the years. The writer for one will be keeping in close touch with progress!

Jay Crosswell, June 1983.

We wish all members and their families
a very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year,
and the best of sailing in 1984.

AND DON'T FORGET THE A.G.M. ON 14th JANUARY.