

GAFFERS LOG



June 2013

50
OLD GAFFERS
ASSOCIATION



50th Anniversary Year 1963 - 2013

And they are off

The first three boats participating in the Old Gaffers Association Round Britain Challenge set off on a beautiful sunny Sunday morning (21st April) from Heybridge Basin in Essex, on the River Blackwater just down from Maldon where the Association was founded 50 years ago.

Quite a crowd of well-wishers had assembled together with local and yachting press photographers - and they were rewarded with a pretty sight as the gaffers slipped out of the lock, hoisted sails and headed for the coast.

Witch, Bonify and Mary Ritchie will be joined by many other OGA boats as they travel clockwise round the UK this summer to celebrate 50 years of the Old Gaffers Association and to raise money for the RNLI. Out to escort them on Sunday was the West Mersea Lifeboat with 4 crew including David Lewin a long-time lifeboat man and OGA member.

The West Mersea Lifeboat Station was founded in 1963 too - and David recounts how the crewman in their first lifeboat used to carry tuppence in case they needed to use a phone box to call the Coastguard.

So they all set off in glorious sunshine but very little wind - a lovely day for pottering in the river but not for trying to get anywhere in a sailing boat! They had to motor most of the day, though the wind picked up in the afternoon and Bonify did manage to sail a few miles without the engine to get round the North Foreland and down as far as Ramsgate, arriving at 7pm. All 3 boats made Ramsgate the same evening and in the early hours a Dutch boat Vlieter which had sailed from Den Helder joined them.

You can track the boats via the tracking link on www.oga50.org

Sue Lewis
OGA Secretary





Photos, including the front cover and pages 4 & 5, courtesy of David Lewin ECOGA

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Jubilee

Our Jubilee year has caught a flood tide. The Round Britain boats and the Relay were given a great send-off from the Little Ship Club in Maldon. It was from here, in 1963, that John Scarlett organised the greatest gathering of gaffers since the Second World War to race to Harwich. This Race and the founding of the East Coast Area, on the back of The Solent Area four years earlier, is the date that marks the formal beginning of the OGA.

We may have faulty memories, but the weather gods do not. The boats started that first race in windless conditions, drifting backwards from the start line on the flood, and took an hour to cross the line. The RBC boats faced precisely similar windless conditions on the Blackwater. They had to be arranged in line ahead for the 'Classic Boat Photo shoot' but were a brave sight with all their canvas up. By the time you read this, they will be well on their way. There are some jolly stories – better than the Yacht Club Bar stuff - to be found in their blogs. The tracking system and their blogs can all be followed on the **OGA50** website and our secretary is also doing a daily blog from **Bonify** on the Classic Boat website or Facebook S.Y. **Bonify**.

The Dutch boats joined the growing RBC fleet on the South coast and more boats joined as the fleet moved westwards to The Scilly Isles. In Dublin, the numbers will have gone past the 50 mark with the style being set by the big cutters like **Brandaen** from the Netherlands, **Annabell** from the Solent and the classic 1825 pilot cutter, **Madcap**, from Strangford Lough.

The fleet is heading for the OGA's great Jubilee Festival at Cowes. Here the French boats will join us. This will be the greatest gathering of gaffers since the great days of the last century. As many as 215 boats have already registered and 124 plan to race on the Saturday. Entries are still coming in. We have filled the Cowes Yacht Haven and are fast filling Shepherd's Wharf. Register now, please, if you want to come to celebrate our Jubilee! We hope you will. It looks as if this Festival will be the biggest in Cowes for a long time, second only to Cowes Week itself. We are most grateful to our sponsors – Associated British Ports, Teamac, James Lawrence Sailmakers, Old Pulteney Whisky, Scottish Canals, Trackaphone, Classic Marine, Character Boats and Haven Knox-Johnston – for making our celebrations possible. Full details of events this year are elsewhere in the Log. Do look at the Sailing By website which is growing almost daily and is full of fascinating information and good stories.

In July, Quartet Books will publish **Sailing Gaffers, Stories from 50 years of the Old Gaffers Association**. The book, compiled by Viv Head, will be on sale at the Jubilee Festival and it can be ordered now via the website.

It answers the question of exactly what is the emblem on our burgee? It catches the flavour of our early days and how things have changed. Old Gaffers were not welcome in yacht clubs or in their races in those days and the rig was in decline. How our boats have changed! Celebrate our boats and our camaraderie with us. See you in Cowes!

Mike Shaw
President, OGA

JAMES LAWRENCE SAILMAKERS

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22-28 Tower Street
Brightlingsea
Essex CO7 0AL
England

Tel: 01206 302863

Fax: 01206 305858

e-mail: lawrencesails@btconnect.com

OGA Half Century. The Jubilee Festival

Fifty years ago a group of friends were sitting by a blazing log fire, doubtless pint in hand, putting the world to rights. Their boats will have been moored at the Elephant boatyard virtually alongside the pub, and as they watched the sunset they were discussing these and the fate of the then ‘unfashionable gaff rig’ in general. In what I’m sure was a very Gafferish sort of way, they decided to do something about it.

From such small acorns great oak trees are born, in this case the Old Gaffers Association. The pub, the Jolly Sailor at Bursledon at the top of the Hamble River, displays a plaque to commemorate the event - and by the way still sports a blazing log fire (and a very good kitchen).

As members will be well aware the OGA is celebrating the half century with a series of events. Prime among these is the Round Britain Challenge, with participants from Brittany, Holland and Belgium joining our members from around the country. The Round Britain Challenge will culminate with the fleet arriving in Cowes. The OGA Jubilee Festival promises to be an event of some significance – billed as the Greatest Gathering of Gaffers and lauded by Classic Boat magazine as ‘the party of the year’. Not only will the RBC boats be there but we shall be pleased to host guests from France, Belgium and Holland and of course members from the Solent, the East Coast and many other areas of the OGA. As we go to press we have a fleet of 215 boats attending and their crews in excess of 850. The event continues to grow and it is not too late to sign up, follow the links on the OGA 50 website. We have moorings arranged at both The Cowes Yacht Haven and Shepards Wharf which means our beautiful boats will be filling the whole of Cowes and on display right in the middle of the town. For people who don’t know Cowes both the car ferry and the fast jet berth within yards of the Haven and a discount voucher has been arranged for those gaffer members who wish to bring a car. Contact dan@seasomewhere.com for more details about this.

One of our biggest goals during this festival is to host the biggest gaff rig race ever. This record attempt will be hosted by the Island Sailing Club, who will also provide race management. They organise the Round the Island race so they know a thing or two about managing large fleets. So far we have 125 boats registered for this fun race and we want it to grow. Don’t be shy, join in and make history with the biggest gaff rig race to date! This **will be** the party of the year if not for the next 50 years. Good food, excellent company, live music, bring your instruments and more important your voice too!

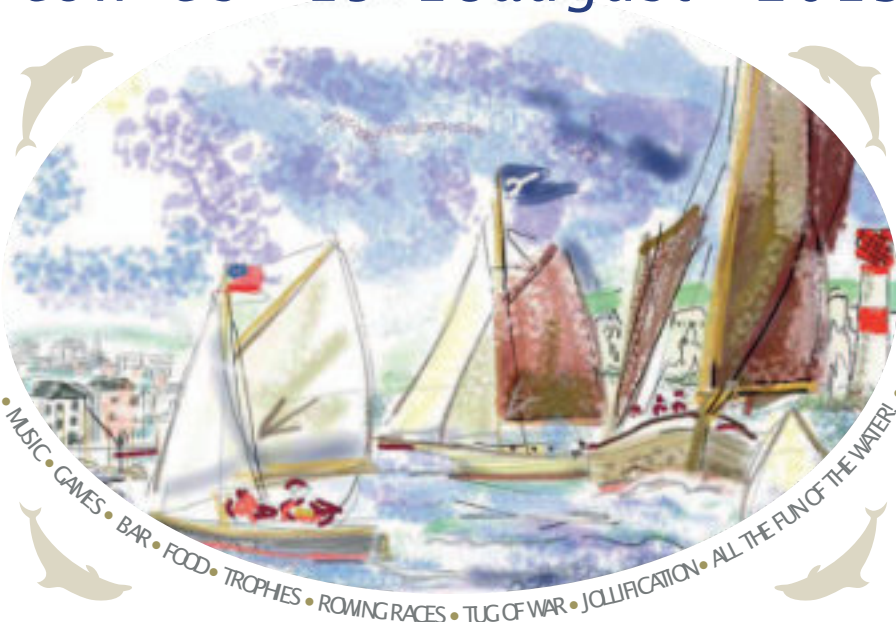
Don’t miss it. See you there!

Gary Flashman
Organising Committee

The Old Gaffers Association
presents the

OGA JUBILEE FESTIVAL

cowes ~ 15-18 August 2013



Registration is now open. Act early and save 25% with the 'early bird' deal. Register online at www.oga50.org

Register your boats and you will benefit from the following:

- aFree berth for three nights at Cowes Yacht Haven (on average worth £60).
- aYour boat's name on the festival t-shirt.
- aAn invitation to the welcome drinks party!
- aFree festival flag!

	BOAT REGISTRATION FEE STARTS FROM:		
	1st February (early bird deal)	1st April	1st June
OGA Members	£30	£35	£40
Non-members	£40	£45	£50

The OGA Jubilee Festival committee invites all gaff rig boats, Shrimpers, Luggers, Scows, and Optimists. All small craft under 12ft are welcome to visit during the day free of charge! Those wishing to store cars and trailers, or trailer sailers longer than 12ft, must pay the boat registration fee. We advise you all to register online as early as possible.

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF THE OGA—THIS WILL BE THE
GREATEST GATHERING
OF GAFFERS

Welcome Aboard

<u>Area</u>	<u>Boats</u>	<u>Member</u>	<u>Address</u>
BC5715	AvelDro	MrRogerBarnes	43WithamFriary,Frome,Somerset,BA115HF
BC5747	MrSteveHancox	LowerHouseCottage,	Preston-on-Wye, Herefordshire, HR2 9JU
DB5739	MrCianGallagher	24CollegePark,	Thernure,Dublin6W
DB5740	MrMarkLynch	CrossSheaves,	DungriffanRoad,Howth,Dublin13
DB5741	MrBenMcDonagh	FairhillCourt,6CuirtanDolain,	Claddagh, CoGallaimh
DB5742	MrWilliamNixon	14EvoraPark,	Howth,CoDublin
DB5743	MrJoeO'Brien	17GlenaulinRoad,	Palmerstown,Dublin20
DB5744	MrSteveWallace	Sruthán,AnCheathrúráa,	CoGalway,EIRE
EC5719	MrPeterGosling	1075BristolRoad,	SellyOak,Birmingham,B296LX
EC5722	MrMikePercival	38ClapgateLane,	Ipswich,Suffolk,,IP30RD
EC5723	ProfStephenHeppell	TheAnchorage,6GeorgeAvenue,	Brightlingsea, Essex, CO7 0NE
EC5725	MissEloisaRule	5RegentStreet,	Manningtree,Essex,CO111BL
EC5726	MrGusCurtis & MrsSarahCurtis		1WestCottages,ArdleighRoad,Dedham, Essex, CO7 6EQ
EC5729	MrGeorgeHutley	HomeFarm,	WrabnessRoad,Ramsey, Essex, CO12 5NH
EC5731	MrMichaelWeeks	14TheDell,	Wickford,Essex,SS118AG
EC5732	MrWayneBrietbart & MrsMaryBrietbart		5NorfolkAvenue,WestMersea,Colchester,CO5 8EN
EC5733	TheCirdanSailingTrust	TheCirdanSailingTrust,	BradwellMarina,Waterside, Bradwell-on-Sea,Essex,CM0 7RB
EC5750	MrJohnRogers & MrsDianaRogers		31AcaciaDrive,Maldon,Essex,CM9 6AW
EC5753	MrRobertTownshend	BramesHall,	Wetheringsett,Suffolk,IP145PU
EC5756	MrRichardCrockatt	CookesCottage,	BrandistonCommon,Reepham, Norwich, NR10 4PF
EC5761	DrChristopherMcNamara	24Hillway,	HIGHGATE,London,,N66QA
NE5720	RomildaMrsMarieBlackburn & MrKenStocks		8ElmClose,OssettWest,Yorks,WF5 0AZ
NE5728	MrStuartHinkins	19HillFoot,	Shipley,WestYorkshire,BD184EP
NE5754	MrPeterFGosling	28BenlawGrove,	Felton,Morpeth, Northumberland, NE65 9NG
NI5752	MrRichardGomes	BallygarvinHouse,	29PortaferryRd,Greyabbey, CoDown,,BT22 2RX
NI5758	MrBenjaminGouk	9NorwoodAvenue,	Belfast,BT42EE
NWA5724	MrNicholasBignell	59RingstoneCrescent,	Nelson,Lancashire,BB99LZ
SOL5714	MrRogerLegg	140RomseyAvenue,	Fareham,Hants,PO169SZ

SOL5716 Mr Geoffrey Probert 60 St Marks Road, Henley-on-Thames,
Oxfordshire, RG9 1LW

SOL5717 Mr Paul Mortlock & Mrs Patricia Mortlock 7 Solent Drive, Barton-on-Sea, Hants, BH25 7AW

SOL5718 Boy Mark Mr Christopher Mann 14 Nightingale Close, Bembridge,
Isle of Wight, PO35 5YP

SOL5721 Mintaka Mr Ian Cowie 78 North Hill, Highgate, London, N6 4RL

SOL5727 Bonita Mr David Draper Compass Cottage, Boxham Lane, Sidlesham Common,
Chichester, PO20 7QF

SOL5730 Taurus Mr Roger Ball Long Close, Clarendon Road, Alderbury,
Salisbury, SP5 3AS

SOL5735 Water Witch Mr Robert Phelps 203 Stanley Road, Twickenham, Middx, TW25NW

SOL5736 Mr Nicholas Hall Chithurst Manor, PETERSFIELD, Hants., GU31 5EU

SOL5737 Mr Mike Collins 3 Barnfield Cottages, Newton Valence, Alton,
Hants, GU34 3RH

SOL5748 Mr John Barker 102 Alma Road, Southampton, Hampshire., SO14 6UW

SOL5749 Mr Nigel Lewis 12 Lincoln Ave, Rose Green, Bognor Regis, West
Sussex, PO21 3EJ

SOL5751 Mr Terry Crees 9 Kennington Square, Wareham, Dorset, BH20 4JR

SOL5755 Vindilis Mr Richard Farmer 28 Fairway, Guildford, Surrey, GU12XJ

SOL5757 Mrs Elizabeth Chilvers Tansley Cottage, Shave Lane, Todber,
Sturminster Newton, DT10 1JA

SOL5760 Mr Richard Lane Landguard Manor, Shanklin, Isle of Wight, PO37 7JB

SOL5763 Mr Stuart Roberts Mr Stuart Roberts, Pine Close House, Lime Grove,
West Clandon, GU4 7UH

SOL5764 Mr Ian Fenston Manor Cottage, Baverstock, Dinton, Salisbury, SP3 5EN

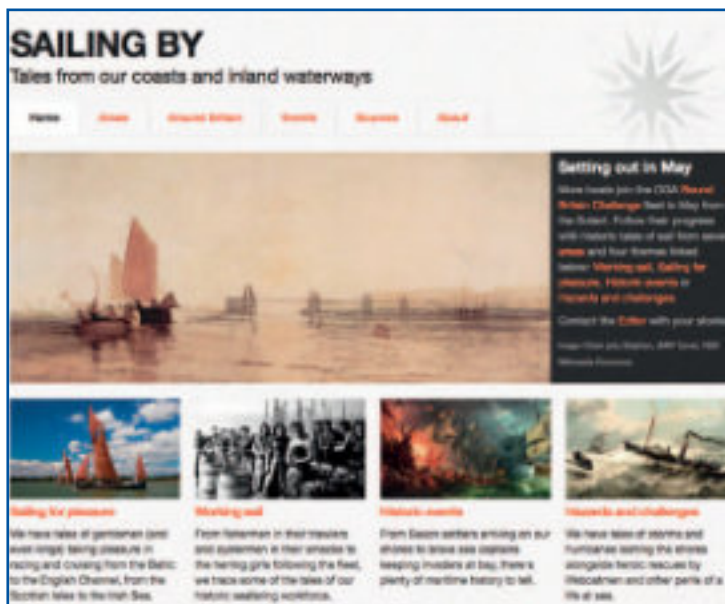
SW5734 Mr Colin Hawkins Pear Tree Cottage, Turkey Street, Llantwit Major,
The Vale of Glamorgan, CF61 1SR

SW5746 Mr John R Smith The Anchorage, 4 Mount Boone Way,
Dartmouth, TQ6 9PL

SW5759 Mr Martin Elliott Park House, Park Hill, Whitecroft, Lydney,
Gloucestershire, GL15 4PQ

SW5762 Mr Bill Lawrence 19 Prince William Quay, Brixham, Devon, TQ59BP

Compass Pipelines Peel Traditional Boat Weekend
Celebrates the Old Gaffer's 50th Birthday.
Thursday 8th to Monday 12th August 2013



By the time you're reading this, the RBC fleet will be making good progress. To keep up to date, why not take a look at 'Sailing by'? Find out where the boats are, what challenges they've met, see some of their photos and link the harbours and ports they're visiting with historic tales of sailors who have 'gone before'.

'Sailing by' is proving very popular. We're adding new stories every few days, based on reports from the fleet alongside historic tales of sail. We're linking to the Classic Boat blog, penned by our own Sue Lewis, National Secretary on 'Bonify'. We're including participating boat's blogs and other websites of interest.

There's a direct link from every page to the OGA50 RNLI fundraising site - please take a minute to donate - every little helps to keep the RNLI volunteers afloat when they're needed most.

Follow the fleet with regular updates: www.sailing-by.org.uk/tags/around-britain

Browse historic tales of sail by Area or Theme: www.sailing-by.org.uk

If you use Facebook, 'Like' us to get regular updates when new content is added.

Contact the Editor to let us know what you think and to share your own stories:
editor@sailing-by.org.uk

Follow the fleet in the Around Britain section linking their progress with historic tales of sail at
www.sailing-by.org.uk/tags/around-britain

News of our National Secretary – Sue Lewis

Our National Secretary, Sue Lewis, is on board **Bonify** which she sails with her husband Howard and is present circumnavigating the UK as part of the RBC fleet. She writes:

My blog is here: <http://www.classicboat.co.uk/news/sue-lewis-oga-blog/>

I am writing it for the CB Magazine - more pics on the Facebook page for SY **Bonify** which has public settings, and perhaps personal stuff on my FB page which is "friends only".

You can see where a few of the participating Old Gaffers are, including **Bonify**, on this: <http://trackaphone.co.uk/callback/publish/rbc/>

Thanks to our recent heavy investment in boat electronics we can also be tracked here if you look for **Bonify** on the Live Ships map page: www.marinetraffic.com. You can see where we are and how we got here, though we may switch the transponder off at night so don't panic if we seem to be "out of range".

Currently in France where it is chilly - lucky we have heating on board!
Receiving emails regularly so that is the best way to keep in touch

Best wishes

Sue and Howard

OGA.50 Sea Shanty Competition



Fancy writing a sea shanty / sea song / folk song to celebrate this special year? A challenge has been thrown open by Solent Area members to write something to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the OGA. NB: Previous experience in singing shanties will not necessarily be an advantage. We must emphasize the fun element. All songs to be sung at the Jubilee Festival in Cowes on August 15th, OR for those at different OGA events a recording (pref a video) to be sent to bmcengland@aol.com.

Open to all comers!

Points will be awarded for how fitting, catchy and spirited the shanty sounds given OGA's 50th Year. New words to old tunes or new tunes. Extra points for how much the performers get their audience to sing along and how raucous the applause!. Maximum five verses. Option to add two more (polite ones) on the night!

Interested? Contact Ben Collins at bmcengland@aol.com

Ben Collins

OGA Trophy Report

YOUR TROPHY SECRETARY NEEDS YOU

This is perhaps the most exciting year in recent times for the OGA and it is a year in which I want to ask all of you to consider whether you are able to nominate someone for one of our many trophies. We really do want to be able to present them all at our AGM in January 2014.

I need nominations for people who have done something spectacular (in your view), or done something fairly ordinary but special. People who have written a great story that appeared in Gaffers Log. Nominations for young sailors, great crews, great boats. I can be reached via the OGA website, or email to cnwsec@oldgaffersassociation.org or simply phone me on 01270 874174 for a chat. You give me the details and I will tell you which trophy would be most suitable in the circumstances.



Colin Ming, last year's winner of the David Cade Trophy, together with his wife, Janet, receiving the trophy.

Sue Farrer

OGA Trophy Secretary

OGA Photographic Competitions 2013

After running the OGA photo competition successfully for many years, Viv Head has stood down, and Mike Garlick has taken over.

The **Original Competition** will continue as before, with three categories; Old Gaffers, General Sailing Shots and Under 18 yrs., and a closing date of 1st December 2013.

To celebrate the OGA 50th anniversary there will be an additional competition, the **OGA 50 Photo Competition**, for photos taken of the anniversary events.

This is open to all ages, with entries from younger competitors especially encouraged, and has a closing date of 30th August 2013.

Judging will be carried out by a panel of traditional boat enthusiasts including Tim Gedge Founder of the Lyme Regis Boatbuilding Academy Den Phillips East Coast Photographer of traditional and classic boats.

Prizes have been generously donated by our sponsors, The Marine Quarterly Magazine and the RNLI. These will be awarded at the National Historic Ships UK Photographic Competition Prizegiving Ceremony on board HMS Belfast in London on 23rd October 2013.

Entries for both competitions should be sent online to Mike Garlick at sueandmichael@waitrose.com and for consideration must be accompanied by the information specified in the photo competition details shown on the website document.

Full details can be found on the OGA website www.olgaffersassociation.org



Wellies and bowsprit. Photo Claudia Myatt.

Submitted for the Sailing Shots category in the 2012 OGA Photographic Competition

A splendid new trophy for DBOGA

By way of introduction of the Dublin Bay Old Gaffers Association's inaugural race in Dublin Bay over the June Bank Holiday weekend for the splendid new perpetual Leinster Plate, Tim Magennis, President of the Association, offers this reflection on the worst Irish Sea disaster which occurred on October 10, 1918.

No more efficient system of transporting mail across the Irish Sea in the century up to the end of WWI could have been conceived than that carried out by the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company, in its time the oldest steamship packet company in the world. And no more trusty and well-run ship existed at the time than the company's **RMS Leinster**, under the command of Captain William Birch, holder of the fleet's senior title of Commodore. When he assembled his senior officers on the morning of October 10, 1918 in Kingstown (present-day Dún Laoghaire) harbour prior to his regular sailing to Holyhead, he was a worried man. He had just failed, yet again, to get the authorities to provide a naval escort for the 2hrs 45 mins crossing, and he had reason to believe reports that German submarines were increasingly active in the Irish Sea, even though the general belief was that the end of the dreadful war was, indeed, approaching. On top of that was a general consensus among informed maritime sources that the small number of German submarine commanders that had survived the virtual destruction of their once proud fleet were, if anything, more determined than ever to strike a blow for the fatherland. Two other factors were playing on the captain's mind: the responsibility of ferrying 22 postal workers and their 250 bags of mail to a punctual arrival in Wales in terms of contract and, most significantly, the presence on his ship of 489 military personnel that effectively transformed **Leinster**, and not for the first time, into a troop ship and a legitimate target for any enemy marauder.

It was just before 0900 hrs when the 771 passengers and crew were secured on board and the **Leinster** steamed out of Kingstown harbour of refuge, and set a SE course to round the Kish Light 11 miles distant. The wind was strong and the seas rough and getting rougher as **Leinster** approached the shallows of the Kish Bank. It was 0945 hrs when Commander Robert Ramm of UB-123 fired the first of three torpedoes... The first missed its target but the second was a direct hit in the area where the postal workers were already sorting the mail. Most of the workers were killed instantly.

The **Leinster** swung around to port, almost facing back to harbour, and then the second torpedo struck, holing her on both sides. This one struck in the area of the boiler room. There was a massive explosion and ten minutes later, the **Leinster** was on the bottom. Those in the lifeboats or in the sea had to wait several hours before rescue arrived on the Kish Bank. Many died of hypothermia in the cold and wild sea. The death toll in the worst-ever disaster in the Irish Sea was 501. The military authorities in charge of censorship did their work well and very little news of the disaster was allowed to reach the Press.

Down all the years since then, the ports of Holyhead and Dún Laoghaire have grown close as a result of faithful commemorations of the disaster that struck them on that bleak November morning. Some years ago a group of local divers succeeded in retrieving **Leinster's** starboard anchor and mounting it in a public area on Dún Laoghaire's main promenade road overlooking the Kish Bank out in the Bay. Irish postal workers down the years have continued to salute their fallen members, only one of whom survived the sinking of the Royal Mail ship.

Inspired by a suggestion made by the Old Gaffers Association HQ to local districts of the organisation to seek out relevant promotions in their own regions suitable to honour the OGA 50th anniversary, the Dublin Bay branch sought the interest and support of the Communications Workers' Union, which represents postal workers in Ireland. The answer was as immediate as it was generous. And so a new

trophy will this year join DBOGA’s prized **Asgard** trophy in the list of prizes for their June Bank Holiday sailing promotion (May 31-June 3) in the River Liffey’s always-welcoming Poolbeg Yacht and Boat Club. The sterling silver **LeinsterPlate**, crafted in Dún Laoghaire – **Leinster’s** last port of departure – will be sailed for in the years ahead in Dublin Bay, following the exact course of RMS **Leinster** to her final resting place.

Ack: Roy Stoke’s **Death in the Irish Sea**

Tim Magennis
DBOGA President





1963 programme cover

The race records for the first 20 years or so make fascinating reading. In this article we bring together some of the highlights of those early times and bring things up-to-date with a look forward to this jubilee year, where we hope to have a number of the same boats competing.

The first East Coast race was organised in 1963, inspired by the earlier races held in the Solent. The three enthusiasts, John Bray, Roy Clarkson and John Scarlett, of the first committee hoped to get a dozen entries, but 27 boats registered in time to go in the programme, and 30 turned up on the start line. The planned course, from Osea Island in the Blackwater, up the Wallet, to Harwich Harbour, proved to be a mistake when the race started in a flat calm, which turned in to head winds all the way. Only 7 boats finished the course, arriving much too late for the supper and party that had been planned. Something must have been right despite this fiasco, because it was agreed that Old Gaffer Races were a Good Thing, and in September 1963 the OGA was formed to run both the East Coast and the Solent Races in future years.

The race in 1964 was held with a much shorter course, and just as well, because a thunder storm before the start left a near calm and fog, through which the fleet of 33 drifted from Osea Island to the finish off East Mersea. The first three boats on corrected time won engraved pewter tankards, while the Tom Bolton cup was awarded to the first fishing or ex-fishing boat to cross the finish line. Tom Bolton had taken part in the first race on his smack *Maria*, but was lost at sea in September 1963, and his pals presented the cup in his memory. The cup is still awarded, and is hotly contested for.

The weather was much better in 1965 with a brisk breeze. With a field of 40 boats, the race was split into two classes as it was realised that even with handicaps, asking 46 foot boats and 17 foot boats to race together might cause problems on the start line! Apart from 2 accidents caused by carelessly handled spectator craft, all went well. A new tradition came into being this year; the winner of the race became Commodore of the East Coast Area until the next race. The annual handing over of the Commodore's pennant is still happens at the prize ceremony. That was not the only new prize, the East Coast Old Gaffer's Trophy awarded to the first boat over 50 years old on corrected time, also dates from this year.

The field increased again in 1966 with 49 boats entered, split into 3 classes. The weather was good again, but this time there was a more serious accident. One of the largest boats (over 47 foot) and a small boat collided in the narrows by the start. A rethink was needed.

In 1967 the race start was moved to Stone, down river from Osea Island. The Stone Sailing Club hosted and helped with arrangements on the day. The start and finish were both at the club and the result was an outstanding success. The “out and back” course guaranteed a beat somewhere whichever way the wind blew, and a record fleet of 56 boats enjoyed a fine day’s sport, with no incidents to spoil the fun. The next two years followed the same pattern, with an ever increasing number of boats on the start line and in 1970 there were 80 entrants on the programme. Going by previous years more were expected on the start line, but the weather put a stop to that. In a strong to gale force westerly wind only 15 boats were on the start line, and only 5 finished the race.

The race went from strength to strength during the 1970s. In 1971 93 boats entered. The largest boat that year was **Solvig**, a 70 foot ex-Baltic trading ketch, and the smallest was **RedRedRose** a 16 foot lugger. 1979 saw innovations with the introduction of class V, for “very large vessels” (later changed to boats over 50’ long) and the first award of the Titheridge Trophy, to be won by the first boat in class I or II sailed by husband and wife only. For the first award, the programme notes “under 5s considered an extra hazard”, hinting at stories we would love to hear! There were 107 entries in 1979, and numbers rose to 140 in the 1980’s.

Following a short period at Mersea in the 1990s, the race moved to Brightlingsea in 1999, where it continues. With the weather so variable in recent years a wider ranges of courses are pre-planned, so there will always be one that works on the day. Attendance has dropped from its peak, probably because there are now so many different Old Gaffer events now, but the race still attracts 60 boats in an average year and often many more.

The last three years have seen widely varying weather conditions. In 2010 gales were forecast and the race was nearly cancelled but not wanting to disappoint the large number of entries the race went ahead to Clacton and back. A squall scattered the fleet on the way back and of the 40 boats starting only 24 finished. The following year a flat calm meant that when the tide turned some boats crossed the start line three times and the boats fastest to kedge gained seven places. Last year, terrible conditions on the Friday prevented many boats reaching the start line with only eight gaffers racing. The strong winds proved ideal for the 57 ft ketch smack **Pioneer**. Her skipper was thrilled to win the East Coast trophy; his father had tried to win the cup for decades. **Pioneer** had been chartered for the day by the OGA to give Young Old gaffers a chance to sail, and it was good to see them do so well when many Old Old gaffers stayed ashore... The corresponding trophy for boats under 50 years old is the Stone Cup, won by a boat at the other end of the fleet, the open cockpit Memory 19 **LettieMay**.

In our Jubilee year we have moved the race to provide a fitting finale to the end of the visit of the RBC boats to the East Coast. This should allow for the largest race in recent times. We also hope to have a strong connection to the first race with perhaps three of the same boats competing.

Fanny of Cowes was built in 1872 and won the first race. She can be seen around the East Coast every summer, always near the front and often winning. Not yet registered for this year, we hope she will make it.



Fanny of Cowes

ShoalWaters: See OGA book review page 49 of this edition



In contrast **ShoalWaters** was brand new in 1963, built by Charles Stock around Fairey Falcon hot moulded hull with the spars and sails from his old boat **Zephyr**. She won the 1964 race and her skipper was awarded the 2009 Royal Cruising Club Medal for Services to Cruising, not least for his 1977 season when **ShoalWaters** sailed 3307 miles including the East Coast Race! Her current owner Tony Smith tells us she will race again in 2013.



Kestrel

James Palmer is definitely planning to race **Kestrel** this year. Another Cowes built boat, believed to date from 1891 she was in a sorry state in 1963; leaking badly she failed to finish the race. Sheathed in glass fibre by a new owner she raced again in 1968, but was unsound to continue afloat by 1991. James bought her for £1 and rebuilt her between 1997 and 2001. Today, she is a fantastic boat. That 3 of the 30 entrants in 1963 are ready to race today, feels like a triumph for the OGA.

Other boats to look out for are **Duet** and **Inanda**. Both of them first raced in 1967, and they have another connection. **Duet** then, and now, spends her time teaching young people to sail, (her crew this year are going for their Duke of Edinburgh awards) while **Inanda** will be crewed by a group of youngsters from the East Coast. OGA boats have proved durable over the past 50 years, with many OGA crews younger than their boats! Long may it continue!

Alison and Julian Cable ECOGA



The Glorious departure from Heybridge Basin. Photo Beverley Daley-Yates

The start of something good

Although living on an island, I discovered sailing comparatively late in life. In the 1940s and 50s money was tight and yachting was something that only pre-war 'toffs' indulged in. My widowed mother couldn't even afford a push bike so a sailing dinghy was quite out of the question. My education took precedence. Anyway experiences of December crossings in the old mail boats from Southampton to Guernsey were not a happy introduction to the sea. My main recollection from the age of eleven was of lying on the floor of the Gents toilet, urine and vomit sloshing around me, and wishing I were dead. The killer was that long, slow, vertiginous roll to starboard, the uncertain pause at the end, then the shuddering, reluctant return roll to port that left one's stomach behind.

Years later when in my early twenties (it must have been '54 or '55) I was home on leave from National Service. At a loose end I was looking for something active to do. I lusted secretly after girls, but in those days nice girls didn't and if I had gone after the other kind my Mum would have killed me. To-day my generation must appear pathetically unsophisticated and immature.

The 'New' harbour in Alderney (new in 1830) was a beautiful location redolent of tar, shellfish and drying nets. The coming and going of small boats and the mysterious activities of fishermen grew into a fascination for me. A tentative request to be taken out on a trip was firmly rejected. They'd taken other untried youngsters before and consequently lost a day's catch as they had had to return the seriously ill wretch ashore. A perfectly understandable refusal as they couldn't risk the financial loss in those hard times.

Nevertheless I was pointed in the direction of an old retired fisherman who still went out for his own pleasure and might be glad of a helping hand however inexperienced. He was a tiny, skinny septuagenarian who looked as though the summer breeze would blow him overboard like a withered leaf, but his hand clasp was the grip of an eagle's claw. He was clad in a Guernsey and navy blue flannel trousers both of which were shiny with wear and fish scales. He was chewing tobacco, a habit I had thought had gone out with the Age of Sail. He gave me a cautious, appraising glance and probably saw more muscle than sense, but he spat a squirt of dark brown liquid over the gunwale and agreed to give me a trial.

His nickname was 'Colonel', not from any military connection, but because after a well-spent youth in wine and women and 'spreading himself around a bit', he was converted by the Salvation Army, put his penny on the drum and became teetotal and a pillar of morality. His turning into a leading light in the 'Army' inevitably attracted this sly, ironic soubriquet from his previous fellow sinners. It was not for a young twerp like me to do anything but address him respectfully as Mr G.....



The Colonel with his trusty Austin

I have never forgotten that first trip out to a boue called, 'The Ledge' to troll for mackerel and pollack. The day was fine with a light breeze from the West, a moderate 5 knot neap tide and a low swell. To my inexpressible glee I found that I enjoyed the motion and have never suffered from sea sickness since. Perhaps your state of mind affects the body. Instead of tensing up I just relaxed into the swing and plunge of the hull. That evening two plump fish were a welcome addition to supper.

The next day was Sunday so there was no fishing, but if I wanted, on Monday I could report, 6am sharp, to the Colonel's house at the top of the 'Val' which led down to the harbour. There his car was waiting. It was a 'sit up and beg' little old Austin with spindly tyres. The back was full of coils of rope, a couple of wicker crab pots and a box of rather ripe bait. The smell was impressive. The 'Colonel' got into the driving seat and explained that, in order to save petrol, we would just coast down the hill so I had to give the car a push to start us off and then jump into the passenger seat. As we trundled along I looked down and saw through holes in the floor the roadway sliding by. On the return trip I was asked to turn the handle to start the engine. This was something of a hit or miss affair which required about ten goes. With my extra weight on board the old Austin laboured a bit going back up hill so I usually volunteered to walk home. It was quicker anyway. Very often 'Colonel' would scrounge a tow from a tractor belonging to a farming acquaintance in exchange for some fish or a chancre.



Hironde, the Colonel's craft, in Bray harbour circa 1950's

Although an eager learner I was unbelievably clueless. On one occasion we came in too early and had to wait until there would be enough water to get into the inner harbour. 'Throw the anchor overboard!' came the order so I grabbed the rusty fisherman's anchor and hurled it into the sea. Unfortunately it was not attached to its warp. Many men would have given me a right bollocking for such crass stupidity, but Mr G----- quietly admitted that it was his fault for leaving it untied. We spent the next hour painstakingly dredging with the killick until the lost anchor was hooked and brought inboard. He never used this instance thereafter to make mock of me – a real gent!

I soon came to admire and respect the immense amount of skill and experience that the 'Colonel' and his contemporaries needed to do their work. I learnt how to use sea marks to steer and navigate by, to appreciate the affect of the strong local tidal streams on the boat's course and over the sea bed. One day a dense fog clamped down when we were about 3 miles offshore. An ancient brass, gimballed compass in a battered teak box was dragged out of the cuddy in the forepeak and placed on the deck in front of the helm. 'Steer North by West boy!' After what seemed like an hour thumping along in

a goldfish bowl of grey cotton wool a line of broken water appeared on our port bow. ‘That’s the end of the Brinchetais - steer Nor Nor West.’ A further seven minutes and a swirl on the surface of the water could be seen. ‘There’s Sauquet - steer Nor West by West.’ So it went on until the end of the breakwater loomed up. For local pilots this used to be commonplace. The intricate knowledge not just of rocks, but of the bottom, of the tidal streams which changed direction and strength every half hour, every counter-current which could be used when punching the tide – all amounted to an encyclopaedic volume of learning that took years to acquire. It angers me now when I hear ‘educated’ people condescendingly refer to fishermen or farmers as, ‘sons of toil’, for their work demands just as much intelligence as many so-called professions quite apart from courage and endurance. To-day perhaps we rely too much on electronic aids as the occasional radar-assisted strandings around our coasts bear witness. Our eyes are often glued to screens when they should be looking carefully at the sea around us. Anyway what happens when the GPS breaks down? The traditional skills of “Lead, Log and Lookout” remain essential fall-back techniques

By the end of that holiday I wanted to be a fisherman. At home the response was firm, ‘Too much sacrifice and money have gone into your education for you to throw it away. You have to use it. Leave fishing to other young men who have been brought up to it and who haven’t been given your advantages.’ That judgement was irrefutably fair so eventually I went off to London to work with a big company at Lloyds. Two years later I ran away to sea and became a professional yachtsman. Not a real seaman perhaps, but much better than being a nothing in the City. I have never regretted that decision.



Hirondelle in 1994 incorrectly rigged as a gaff sloop.
Traditionally island fishing boats of this type were rigged as lugsail
schooners with a boomkin taking the sheet of the mainsail.

Royston Raymond
South West OGA

Slowly she came creeping into sight around the headland, her big topsail raking from the sky every last ounce of the failing breeze as she pushed over the strengthening ebb. I recognised her at once – ‘Grey Dawn’.

Half an hour earlier I too had ghosted around Rhooose Point with little wind and the very last of the flood tide. Leaving Watermouth in Devon singlehanded just before low water, I had hoped to get to Barry on that tide but light airs had dogged me all the way and the best I could hope for would be to anchor in Porthkerry Bay. But even that modest goal was denied me that day as the tide had turned and I had brought up here, just off the cliff three cables ENE of Rhooose Point, not good holding ground but safe enough in these calm conditions.

After two seasons cruising the Severn Estuary and the Bristol Channel in my well-loved little gaff sloop ‘Swift’ I had decided to “go modern” and, after selling her in 1959 at a modest profit had acquired a larger vessel. ‘Jenny Vee’ was a clinker, transom–stem centreplate auxiliary sloop built in 1948 by Chesford Yacht & Launch Company of Kingsbridge. She was 20ft L.O.A., 7ft 6ins beam and drew 2ft with the plate up. Her topsides were built-up and her deck flush to the stem which gave her tremendous and comfortable accommodation for her length. Going below her galley and pantry shared a compartment with the Baby Blake heads (whose box served as a seat when cooking) and which was separated by sliding doors from the saloon with its two fixed and two folding berths around a mahogany table under the lovely skylight. In her deep and roomy cockpit was installed a 4 hp engine and she had a Bermudan mainsail whose luff slid up a groove in the after side of her streamlined mast for maximum efficiency going to windward.

I’m sorry to say the much-vaunted advantages of both these new-fangled inventions – engines and three-cornered mainsails – soon proved to be a snare and a delusion.

The auxiliary (when it went) was necessary to hold her exactly head-to-wind while her mainsail was being set, lest first the headboard then one by one the battens foul the shrouds and then the topping lift. Hauling it was worse because as well as fouling everything on the way down the sail had to be laboriously hauled aloft then captured before it billowed out, for only the headboard was held to the mast. (‘Swift’s’ gaff mainsail would come down by itself when the halyards were let go from the cockpit and it sat between her twin topping lifts whilst I dealt with more pressing matters such as picking up a mooring or securing alongside.) My seamanship definitely began to deteriorate, eroded by the constant thought “well – I can always start the engine”. I was soon brought up short, however, as the evil spirit which inhabits every internal combustion engine realised the power that it had gained over me and chose the very times I was depending on the auxiliary to stop it dead.

So it was in ‘Jenny Vee’s’ cockpit that I sat, glass in hand, watching ‘Grey Dawn’ ghost ever nearer. Then she too had to bring up about a cable astern, the rattle of her anchor chain echoing off the cliffs in the still air.

Built in 1904 to a design by G. L. Watson, ‘Grey Dawn’ was RNLB Official Number 530 and I think was originally named ‘Oldham’. On completion she was sent immediately to the Abersoch Lifeboat Station at Penrhyn, where, when needed, she was launched down the slipway straight from the Lifeboat House. She remained on duty there until the station was closed in 1931, and was (I believe) the last sailing and pulling lifeboat – as opposed to pulling and sailing lifeboat – to serve the RNLB. Her L.O.A. was 38ft and her beam 9ft 6ins. With her two centreboards and lowering rudder she drew very little water.

In 1939 she was sold out of the Lifeboat Service, renamed and converted to a cruising boat, with a spacious cabin built right out to her topsides without sidedecks. Aloft she sported a generous gaff ketch rig. She retained the cork-filled buoyancy around her topsides which was a feature of all Watson lifeboats and added considerably to her stability, besides acting as a very effective fender when coming alongside. Her two centreboards, the main one now in the cabin and the smaller one now under the cockpit, enabled her to be balanced easily under any conditions, and she slipped along at a good rate of knots. Under her owner "Buster" Lewis, she had gained an enviable reputation for speed and seaworthiness and she was winner more than once of the "Cock of the Bristol Channel" race, which entitled her to emblazon her burgee with a golden cockerel. She was normally moored in Barry Entrance Harbour, hard by 'Zingari' (another converted sailing lifeboat) and 'Tramontana' (a beautiful Harrison Butler designed 16-tonner).

Fancying company, I shortened in my cable, tripped the hook and drugged back on the tide to fetch up fifty feet abreast of her. Conversing over the water, we discussed our position. Buster had to be back in Barry that night to start work in the docks early next morning. I had to get back as soon as possible to St. Pierre Pill, another 25 miles up-channel, also to get back to work. Buster had an engine that worked, but no petrol. I had some petrol but an engine that wouldn't work.

We did a deal. I would give him a gallon of petrol and he would tow me into Barry from where I had a good chance of getting back on the next tide. I rowed my punt across with the petrol can and sat chatting for a while with Buster and his crew.

Then 'Grey Dawn' got under way and, after passing a warp, stemmed the current whilst I weighed. After an hour or so pushing against the ebb we were in Barry Entrance Harbour, where I kedged to await the turn of the tide and the wind which I hoped would come with the cooling of the night. I think that was the last time I saw Buster to talk to for, sadly, some time later he was lost overboard from the deck of a lighter off the North Cornish coast.

I also lost sight of 'Grey Dawn'.

Almost fifty years later I was beating up Milford Haven in my present gaff cutter 'Happy Quest'. I rounded the corner into Beggars Reach when my eye lighted upon a familiar unmistakable silhouette. Surely that ketch lying on a mooring off Rudder's Boatyard was 'Grey Dawn'!

And so it proved. I tacked in close and jilled about while I exchanged a few brief words with the man on board, who turned out to be the owner. He had restored and refitted her and she was now in ship-shape condition. His idea was to go on a long cruise with her, but he had as yet no firm plans. Later, I saw her again several times still lying unmanned on the same mooring, but then she disappeared once more.

Where is she now, I wonder. Does any OGA Member know?

David Grainger
BCOGA

2013 Sailing Events

For reasons of space not all “meet and greet” events for the Round Britain are included here – just those which have been combined with a local rally. For more see www.oga50.org

*Events which form part of the 50th Anniversary Round Britain Challenge

31st May - June 2nd 2013

Solent Area: Yarmouth Old Gaffers Festival on the Isle of Wight www.yarmoutholdgaffersfestival.co.uk. During the Festival, Yarmouth’s picturesque harbour will be filled with life and colour with more than 100 visiting traditional sailing, steam and motor vessels, including the cream of the Old Gaffers fleet. On shore there will be a huge range of attractions keeping the thousands of visitors entertained from morning til night all weekend.

*31st May to 2nd June 2013

Dublin Bay OGA 50th Anniversary Traditional Boat Rally over the Irish June Bank Holiday weekend to coincide with the arrival of the Round Britain Challenge fleet in Ireland. Berthing at Poolbeg YBC Marina and a programme of racing. Dublin Bay Area have a prestigious new trophy to race for. Find details and register interest on www.oga50.org

*31st May to 4th June

Campbeltown: Those of the Round Britain Challenge fleet intending to sail round the very top will be welcomed here by the Scottish Area. Find details and register interest on www.oga50.org

7th-9th June 2013

Beale Park and Thames Boat Show. Old Gaffers stand as usual. mike.stevens.killay@talktalk.net

*8th-9th June 2013

Northern Ireland Area: Weekend rally to welcome the Round Britain fleet to Belfast. Berthing in the new marina right next to the historic Harland and Wolff dockyard and the brand new “Titanic Belfast” attraction. Craic aplenty. Find details and register interest on www.oga50.org

*14th-17th June 2013

Stornoway welcomes those of the Round Britain Challenge fleet not going through the Caledonian Canal but sailing round the top. A Traditional Boat Festival weekend with racing and social events. Find details and register interest on www.oga50.org

*15th - 16th June 2013

Scotland Area: Loch Melfort is the beautiful setting for an informal Gaffers gathering and party. Moorings and anchorages nearby. Find details and register interest on www.oga50.org

21st-23rd June

Clyde Classics

A classic yacht regatta incorporating the first classic yacht designer symposium to be held in the UK, together celebrating the design heritage of the Firth of the Clyde.

Full information on this exciting event can be found on www.clydeclassic.com

*21st-24th June 2013

Lerwick, Shetland welcomes the Round Britain Challenge fleet. Find details and register interest on www.oga50.org

22nd-23rd June 2013

East Coast Area: Royal Hospital School Rally. Holbrook Creek and Wrabness beach, and a very special occasion, celebrating 300 years of this famous ex-naval college (historically nick-named “the cradle of the Navy”). www.eastcoastgaffers.org.uk

28th June - 1st July

National event in Bristol Channel Area / Trailer Section: Traditional Sail Cardiff 2013 - This will be a national 3 day event for small gaffers and trailer-sailers to celebrate the OGA's 50th Anniversary in 2013 and for larger gaffers and classics locally, and any who want to make the passage up the Bristol Channel. Cardiff Bay is non-tidal and one of the most accommodating stretches of water in the country for boats of all sizes. Hosted by two great yacht clubs with camping available, there will be river-raiding up the Ely and Taff Rivers, racing for boats of all sizes and a grand parade of sail. For those who wish, boats can lock-out through the barrage (an experience not to be missed) where a race for larger boats and intrepid smaller ones will be staged in the Bristol Channel.

Find details and register interest on www.oga50.org

***1st July 2013**

Eyemouth welcomes the Round Britain Challenge fleet and there will be a send off for the restored Fife lugger “Robina Inglis” conveying Round Britain Relay tokens to Newcastle. Find details and register interest on www.oga50.org

5th-7th July 2013

Devon Area's main annual event: the Start Bay Rally will be run alongside the first weekend of the week-long Classic Channel Regatta forming what is now billed as Dartmouth Classics Weekend, so there should be a fantastic spectacle in Start Bay. www.devongaffers.org.uk & www.dartmouthclassics.org.uk

***5th-7th July 2013**

North East Area: in conjunction with Newcastle Quayside Marina we will host a Festival of Sail in the heart of the North East. A large scale gathering of gaff rigged and other traditional and characterful craft, including Round Britain Challenge and Relay participants and involving as many maritime and heritage organisations as possible in a week-end of activities including: parade/concours d'élégance; craft, volunteer and trade stands; music; food and drink. Find details and register interest on www.oga50.org

6th-7th July 2013

Solent Area: 3 Creeks Rally and race

6th-7th July 2013

Dartmouth Classics Weekend

Full information on this exciting weekend can be found on www.dartmouthclassics.org.uk

***11th-14th July 2013**

North East Area: Grimsby and Cleethorpes Yacht Club will receive and entertain Round Britain Challenge & Relay participants with a programme of social and sailing events over 3 days. Round Britain Relay tokens will be received on board SY Camay and will be sent onwards. Find details and register interest on www.oga50.org

***20th - 28th July 2013**

East Coast Area: OGA Jubilee Cruise – a week of events during the school holidays for all ages of people and sizes of boats. Starting at Ipswich, Suffolk and finishing at Brightlingsea, Essex for the Annual East Coast Race. With Round Britain Challenge fleet participation on their way.

Check details and register interest on www.oga50.org

21st-28th July 2013

North Wales Area: Conwy River Festival incorporating races for Nobbies, classics and gaffers www.northwalesoga.org - also includes the All Wales Boat Show 24th – 28th July 2013 www.allwalesboatshow.com

26th-29th July 2013

Devon Area: Plymouth Classic Boat Rally

2nd- 4th August 2013

Northern Ireland Area: Ardglass at Anchor

***3rd August 2013**

Swale Match invites the Round Britain Challenge fleet to gaffer racing in the Thames Estuary www.eastcoastoldgaffers.co.uk/events/swale-match

***3rd-5th August 2013**

East Coast Area: Ramsgate Rally for local boats and the Round Britain Challenge fleet, Free berthing and 3 days of fun and games – with participation from the town. Find details and register interest on www.oga50.org

9th-11th August 2013

Trailer Section: Rally at Clywedog Sailing Club, Llanidloes

8th-10th August 2013

Irish Sea Areas: Peel Traditional Boat Weekend incorporating the Irish Sea 50th Anniversary celebrations. Find details and register interest on www.oga50.org

***15th -18th August 2013**

National event in Solent Area: OGA JUBILEE FESTIVAL at Cowes. National birthday party! Members and non-members welcome. Music, games, bar, food, trophies, rowing races, tug'o'war - there'll be racing in the Solent on the Saturday for prestigious once in a lifetime Anniversary trophies and crew parties every night. Includes Solent Annual Race. See www.oga50.org for information about priority registration.

17th August 2013

Devon Area: Dittisham Regatta Gaffers Race at 1400 for those in the Area who can't make the big Jubilee Festival at Cowes.

23rd-26th August 2013

North Wales Area: 7th Annual Traditional Sailing Festival at Holyhead

Welcome by the Holyhead Marina, Civic reception, racing for young and older, both large and small craft welcome, lots of entertainment. www.nothwalesoga.org

OGA 50th anniversary events listing

24th – 26th August 2013

East Coast Area: Crouch/Fambridge rallies combined into one long weekend rally over the Bank Holiday weekend. Boats returning to the east coast after the big Cowes event will wind up (or wind down) here. www.eastcoastgaffers.org.uk

6th - 8th September 2013

Solent Area: Rally at Bembridge

14th-16th September 2013

Lake District Area: Small boat regatta on Ullswater.

21st September 2013

Solent Area: Centenary Chase pursuit race at Yarmouth, Isle of Wight, organised by the Royal Solent Yacht Club.

21st September 2013

East Coast Area: Maldon Town Regatta, Essex where old gaffers and smacks race in the River Blackwater from www.maldonregatta.co.uk

11th January 2014

OGA AGM at the Greenwich Yacht Club. Times to be announced later.



The advertisement for **WATERCRAFT** magazine features a collage of sailboats on the water. On the left is a thumbnail image of the magazine cover, which includes the title "WATERCRAFT" in large red letters, the subtitle "DESIGNING BOATS • BUILDING BOATS • USING BOATS", and a list of featured articles: "Build Your Own Classic Craft-Rigged Dayboat", "FROM THE PAUL GARTSIDE PLANS INSIDE", "Racing the Solent", "Pedalling the Avon", "Building a Carvel-Planked Yacht", and "Sailing Kite".

Discover the **New Gaffers** in
WATERCRAFT

We all admire those immaculate restorations but if you've ever thought it would be quicker and easier to build a new one, you should read about today's affordable new gaffers in the practical bi-monthly magazine from Pete Greenfield and friends. **WaterCraft** is available from good newsagents or £6 inc p&p from: **WATERCRAFT, BRIDGE SHOP, GWEEK, CORNWALL TR12 6UD**

For further information, call **01326 221424** or see: www.watercraft-magazine.com

South West Area OGA

2013 is the 40th Anniversary of the South West Area of the OGA. With effect from 1st April the Devon Area has reverted back to its original name so as to better cover Cornwall. We hope a member based in Cornwall will come forward to organize an event in Cornwall and join the South West Area committee.

The last event of Devon Gaffers was Mike Lucas' lunchtime seminar on Knots at the Abbey Inn, Buckfastleigh on Saturday 9 March. Mike is an acknowledged expert and ran a very interesting session teaching members a variety of knots. No one was in a hurry to go home. It is hoped he may be prevailed upon to repeat the event later in the year as all members whatever their experience will learn something useful.



The first event of South West Gaffers on Saturday 13 April was the Annual Fitting Out Supper at Jolly Jacks, Mayflower Marina. Following the meal an illustrated talk was given by Nick Beck, skipper and co-owner of the pilot cutter "Amelie Rose" star of the ITV series "The Hungry Sailors". Nick is an excellent speaker and his IT background showed in the quality of the presentation. Whilst the talk was entitled "The building of the Amelie Rose", it could equally have been called "Live your dream". Nick also strongly believes it is vital the OGA use the 50th Anniversary to start a fund to train youngsters to sail the beautiful gaffers being built by Luke Powell and others so they don't just become museum pieces.



Following consultation with members the house flag and regalia have been redesigned and will be available to purchase from our Regalia Officer, Pat Cassidy by the time this report appears in print.

Preparations are in hand to welcome the Round Britain Challenge boats when they call in at the Mayflower Marina, Plymouth on 8th May. On the following morning, a parade of sail has been planned in Plymouth Sound as the fleet sets sail for the Scillies. Having had weeks of strong easterlies in 2013, it is hoped the weather gods will be kind to the fleet as it sails westwards during the first couple of weeks of May. The South West Area Token for the Relay is a presentation basket containing a bottle of “Navy Strength” Gin from the world famous Plymouth Distillery. It is hoped this will fetch a good price at the auction of tokens during the Cowes Festival later in the year.

South West Gaffers are aiming for a record turnout over 5/7th July for The Annual Start Bay Race & Rally which this year will form part of The Dartmouth Classics Weekend in conjunction with the Classic Channel Regatta. See <http://www.dartmouthclassics.org.uk/>. The annual race will be held at noon on Saturday following a parade of sail. Even if you don’t want to race come and see the spectacle of 100 classic yachts sailing in Start Bay and join us for supper at the Royal Dart Yacht Club. On the Sunday there will be a BBQ on their terrace with music by the local sea shanty group “Old Gaffers”.

26/29 July – SWOGA are once again helping to run Plymouth Classics. If you can’t get there by boat it is worth visiting by car on the Saturday to see the fleet moored up in Sutton Harbour.

Hopefully SWOGA will be able to report on some very successful 50th Anniversary events in the next issue!

Gil Heywood
Area Secretary

North Wales Area OGA

Our early season boat shed party at Port Penrhyn was held a little later than normal on Saturday, 27th April 2013. The reason for this was to coincide with Scott's launch of his 47ft. yawl Valerie. She was built in 1895 as a yawl she was later cutter rigged and latterly became a schooner. Scott has now restored her back to her original form a clipper bowed Victorian gentleman's yacht. Audrey Metcalfe, Scott's Mum performed the naming ceremony and spoke about when she first saw Valerie in a very sorry state in Liverpool and hoped Scott would not see her!!! It was ironic that she should end up at Port Penrhyn for Scott to restore.

The wind was fairly blustery but this did not stop Scott from slipping out of the dock under sail to take her for a quick sail checking sails and ballast etc. As yet Scott has not fitted an engine.



Valerie

44 attended the evening party in the boat shed. The sunset over the dock was superb but very very cold. Live music was provided by Mad Ed's Hot Five and food once again was provided by a few of our members. Although Ann Mounfield was not feeling her normal self she still managed to cook and serve all the shepherds pies. Thanks have been extended to her and to Joan McBride and Lesley Alexander, for the scrummy puds. Also thanks to everyone for making the whole day a huge success. Everyone chatted and enjoyed the banter and making new friends.

Beale Park and Thames Boat Show

Mike Stevens is once again organising the usual stand at Beale Park Boat Show, at Pangbourne nr. Reading, Berkshire 7th, 8th 9th June 2013. The OGA will again exhibit both on and off the water. Gaffers will be on display within the Marine Village area. Merchandise will also be on sale. A more detailed report will be in the Sept. Log.

Holyhead Traditional Sailing Festival

50

23rd—26th August 2013

50

Also incorporating Holyhead Lifeboat open day and lifejacket

Holyhead-Lifeboat.co.uk


Lifeboats

testing



HOLYHEAD MARINA

North Wales's premier sailing destination



Stena Line

PORTS

For more details and programme
contact Sue 07527530309

See the video at

<http://holyhead.northwalesoga.org>

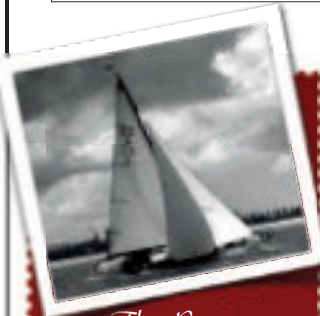
Organised by the Old Gaffers Association in its 50th year

Compass Pipelines Peel Traditional Boat Weekend

Peel Parties with the OGA

Thursday 8th to Monday 12th August 2013

RECORD NUMBER OF ENTRIES FOR PEEL 2013



The Boats

To date 42 entries have been received which is a big increase from the same time last year. The majority are from Irish and Welsh ports, many of which are first timers to Peel.

This year's entries include:

KAJU 2, a 34.7ft, Fractional Bermudan Sloop, built in Germany in 1951. This is her first visit to the festival.

PHYLLIS, a 26ft Royal Mersey Restricted Class vessel and the winner of the Creek Inn Trophy for best gaff rig in 2012

NOAMH CRONAN, a 56ft, Galway Hooker with a Gaff Cutter rig was built of larch on oak in Dublin in 1997 and is also revisiting Peel.

CONTACT

Mike Clark - Chairman, Tel: +447624 450146, Email: mclark@manx.net.

See our Facebook page for pictures of PL12 facebook.com/PeelTraditionalBoatWeekend

This year's Compass Pipelines Peel Traditional Boat weekend is already shaping up to be the Premier Event of the Irish Sea for 2013. The festival, extended to five full days, is the place to be from Thursday 8th to Monday 12th August when Old Gaffers from all around the Irish Sea have chosen to party in the Isle of Man to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Old Gaffers association. Mike Clark, Chairman of the Peel Traditional Boat Weekend Committee, says he's honoured that Peel has been chosen and delighted to host such a prestigious event. "We have been working very hard to ensure that the hospitality, for which Peel is famous, lives up to expectation and that the weekend is packed full of activities and entertainments for crews and shore based visitors alike."

Hospitality

Peel's hospitality is second to none. A special event organised this year is Locally smoked kipper breakfasts Saturday night's Ceilidh and buffet will be delivered to registered boats at the Masonic Hall in Peel which daily thanks to the efforts of early-rising volunteers who navigate the quayside in cars, inflatables and on foot to ensure breakfast arrives on time.

A newly refurbished **Peel Sailing and Cruising Club** will again be the hub of events and, as well as hosting a Thursday night BBQ and Sunday Hot Pot Supper is the place

to enjoy a pint, catch up with old and make new friends.

of Manx ceilidh dancing. A firm favourite with crews is the Pie and Pea Supper which is being served to crews on Friday

Shore-Side Entertainment - not to be missed!

THROUGHOUT THE FESTIVAL

- Live music around the quayside
- Leese Museum display and Treasure Hunt
- House of Manannan Museum
- Moore's Kipper Tours

FRIDAY 9TH

- Parade of Sale
- Ghost Walk
- Fishyard Food Sale

SATURDAY 10TH

- Quick and Dirty Boat Building and race across the river mouth
- Run-up to Rio Paralytic Olympics
- Punch and Judy
- Manx Dancing

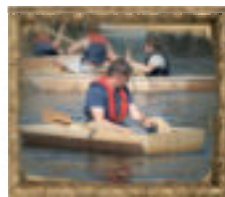
SUNDAY 11th

- Farmers' Market
- Manx Craft Guild Fair
- Punch and Judy

- Manx Dancing
- Parade of Sale
- Prize Presentation

MONDAY 12th

- Parade of Sail



Around the Areas OGA 50th Anniversary

Holyhead – Staging port for RBC vessels

The North Wales Area are supporting the OGA at 50 Round Britain Challenge in 2013 by arranging an event at Holyhead over the weekend of the 25th and 26th May 2013. So far 17 boats have expressed an interest in attending this weekend including a few of our area members who wish to sail around to meet them.

Now that the boats have started their journey you can check on their location by visiting the dedicated web site <http://oga50.org> and track those boats who will be carrying Trackaphones. No computer - well fret none - please contact Barry Healas direct on 01524-276258.

The Welsh token will also carry a Trackaphone and will commence it's journey from Holyhead at the end of May. Unfortunately this June log will be published after the event and a more detailed report will be in the Sept. Log.

Traditional Boat Festival at Holyhead

Don't forget the dates of the 7th Traditional Boat Festival at Holyhead to be held over the August Bank Holiday weekend i.e. 23rd to 26th August 2013. (see poster elsewhere in this log). The event is very much supported by the Holyhead Marina, Holyhead Town Council and Stenaline Port. Classic Boat Magazine supply us with subscriptions as do other magazines including PBO, Yachting Monthly and Water Craft. Two other huge supporters are Hempel Paints and Varnish (see advert elsewhere in this log). Also Weird Fish clothing has always been a keen sponsor. The event is hosted by Holyhead Sailing Club. The RNLi Holyhead Lifeboat will also hold their open day over the same weekend.

Sue Farrer
Area Secretary



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BRIILLANT GLOSS

North East Area OGA



Its official!

The North East area membership numbers thirteen! I'm no more superstitious than the average seafarer – but you never know – so may I plead for an increase beyond this inauspicious number? Perhaps I should take the Gallic approach – in France number thirteen is lucky; black cats not.

OGA 50 & the North East Maritime Festival.

If our total membership attends we will still be outnumbered by guests and visitors to Eyemouth, Newcastle and Grimsby.

That said, there will still be room & a warm North East welcome for everyone.

By the time this is published most of the Round Britain Challenge fleet will be well under way, our most travelled expected visitors being from the Netherlands and France. Everyone is looking forward to a summer of celebration.

The details of the events at Eyemouth, Newcastle and Grimsby will be circulated via the ubiquitous internet.

In outline:

Eyemouth 1st July

About 20 visiting & local boats are expected to celebrate the departure of the NE relay tokens southward aboard 'Good Hope' Our thanks to Johnnie Johnston who has almost single handedly raised the level of interest in the OGA from near zero to if not fever pitch, at least to a good rolling boil!

Newcastle 5th – 7th July

Thirty craft from all over the UK and continent will converge on the iconic Newcastle Quayside for three days of events centred on giving everyone a good time whilst celebrating the OGA Golden Jubilee and the unique North East Maritime heritage. The Festival is being held in conjunction with the Coble & Keelboat Society; the North East Maritime Trust; the Blyth Tall Ship Project and other local,

Around the Areas OGA 50th Anniversary

community organisations. All our supporters and sponsors are being acknowledged in the Festival publicity but I must personally thank:: The Port of Tyne; Newcastle City Council; NE1 Ltd and the Copthorne Hotel, Newcastle without them the event could never have got under way.

Grimsby 13th , 14th July

More thanks to Tony Kiddle, OGA stalwart & Commodore of the Grimsby & Cleethorpes Yacht Club for the social & water borne events planned to send the fleet on its way South. Tony will be bringing the NE relay token aboard 'Look Back in Time' to the Jubilee finale at Cowes.

North East Maritime Festival Legacy

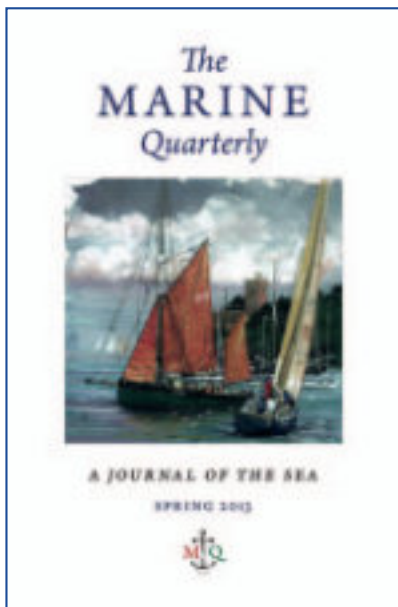
At the end of the Newcastle event it is hoped to launch a project to celebrate, preserve and develop the North East Maritime heritage.

Proposals include: a Maritime Heritage Convention and the founding of an heritage centre within the Port of Tyne. The overall concept is to provide a focus for our unique contribution to the national heritage.

The Cutty Sarky flyer brought the tea,
The Geordie brig the coal to boil it.
A paddler towed the wooden walls away,
Turbinia showed the world the sky.

Jim Bell

Area Secretary.



The Marine Quarterly is 'the thinking sailor's seajournal', according to Tom Cunliffe. The mq is full of stories about the seaseen from the sea, and the parts of the land visible from the sea. We are offering OGAmembers, their crew, friends and relations a 10% discount on their first year's subscription.

Subscribe online at www.marinequarterly.com, or fill in the form on the leaflet enclosed with this newsletter, writing in the magic letters OGA to secure your discount.

Bon voyage!

Sam Llewellyn

Editor, The Marine Quarterly
Hope Farm, Lyonshall
Kington, Herefordshire HR5 3HT
01544 340636

Canada

We, in Canada, are excited and proud to celebrate the OGA's Golden Jubilee with our friends in the UK. When the first gaffer's race took place in 1963 on the Solent, I doubt if those involved ever dreamed what they were starting or that decades later traditional sailing would have such a following throughout the world.

Our 50th celebrations, albeit not as grand as those in the UK, will commence with a small boat regatta on Nicola Lake in British Columbia's interior on August 08 (one year later to the day and the same location of my holiday that turned into major emergency surgery and a couple of months in hospital). It was not planned, just a coincidence – fortunately I'm not superstitious. We'll be the guest of the Kamloops Sailing Association and Commodore Al Knight.



Kamloops Sailing Association, Nicola Lake BC: Photo courtesy of John Drayton

We'll be returning to the Vancouver area for a BBQ, hosted by OGA member Trevor Dickenson. This will coincide with your own celebrations and you can be sure we will raise a glass to Gaffers throughout the world.

Colin Ming
Commodore

Around the Areas OGA 50th Anniversary

The Trailer Section OGA

The Trailer Section is now looking forward to the National Trailer Section Rally at Cardiff on 28th-30th June 2013.

It is being hosted by the Bristol Channel Area who are also holding their 'Traditional Sail Cardiff' event in conjunction with the rally.

Cardiff 'Bay' is in fact an inland fresh water lake created when the barrage was built across the estuaries of the Taff and Ely rivers. This created a really interesting area of water which, although quite small nevertheless offers interesting opportunities which vary from the vibrant waterfront life of the Inner Harbour (which is the old Tiger Bay), to the chance to explore both rivers that flow into the lake.

The OGA event is centered around the Cardiff Yacht Club where a warm welcome is guaranteed, with good food, and entertainment. In addition, there are three launching ramps and a camping on site. We could not ask for more.

We have arranged a full programme of events, a race, river raiding and, on the Sunday morning, a full scale naval assault on the Inner Harbour involving muskets, cannon and gunpowder. We are being ably helped by the 'Hearts of Oak' Re-enactment Society, so all in all it should be a finewonderful event to which we warmly invite all of our gaffer friends.



Mike Stevens
Area Secretary

East Coast Area OGA

We've had a busy spring on the East Coast, starting in February with a **visit to the Pioneer Trust** at Harker's Yard in Brightlingsea, to look over the restored smack lying in her mud berth. After that it was back ashore and into the Trust's headquarters to see pictures of her restoration in the warm and eat fish and chips. **Pioneer** hope to be heading down to Cowes for the August party, and they will be very happy to show anyone over her who could not get to Brightlingsea.

The **East Coast's annual dinner** on 9th March was held in the comfortable surrounding of the Royal Burnham Yacht Club, starting with a performance by the Brandy Hole Shanty men, organised by Mike Peyton. They performed his proposed "East Coast Anthem," sung to the tune of the Manchester Rambler. After dinner Jo and Paul Masters entertained the gathering by reading extracts from the log of their boat **Clytie**, from her launch in 1922 up to the start of the second world war.

Mike Peyton, a founder member of the OGA gave a talk later in the month at the **Nottage Institute**, Wivenhoe, about his war time service and life time of sailing experiences. Unfortunately he is very nearly blind now, so can no longer draw, but he can certainly still give an interesting talk!

We had hoped to hold our **first sailing event** of the season at Easter, but decided at the last minute to cancel over safety concerns. The fact that it snowed that weekend, and people had been thinking of camping, made it a good call!

The crews of four boats setting off on the Round Britain Challenge were at the Maldon Little Ships Club, for the **fitting out supper**. **Bonify**, **Witch**, and **Cygnets** are hoping to go all the way round, while **Mary Ritchie** was presented with the East Coast Token of local Maldon produce, which she will carry round to Cowes to hand to one of the Solent boats.



In the lock together

Around the Areas OGA 50th Anniversary

Mary Richie, Bonify and Witch set off from Heybridge Basin next day. Given it was only 0900, and there had been much drinking the night before, a decent crowd gathered in bright sun shine to see the boats away and down the Blackwater with the RNLI and two press boats in attendance.

Up coming events for the East Coast

Swallows & Amazons 25th-27th May
RHS rally, Saturday 22nd June.
Ipswich Regatta 20st July
Jubilee Cruise 22st-29th July
East Coast Race 27th July
Burnham-on-Crouch Rally 23rd – 26th August

Entry forms for all these events will be found at www.eastcoastclassics.co.uk. Please get them in as soon as you can as the organisers are busy with OGA 50 events!

OGA50 events in Ramsgate.

Registration essential. Book your place now at our OGA50 website – page <http://oga50.org/#/ramsgate-events/4566390411> With your help we can fill the inner harbour where free berthing is offered. Berthing outside in the visitors area will though be charged at the normal rate. You therefore need to book NOW. Acknowledgement of Registration will be sent, with a welcome pack additionally sent out about 4 weeks before the event by email.

Saturday August 3rd - Monday August 5th, 2013

Regency Royal Ramsgate welcomes the OGA

The OGA50 Relay and OGA50 Round Britain Challenge comes to town on Saturday 3rd to Monday 5th August en route to Cowes. Free berthing courtesy of Thanet District Council and the Port of Ramsgate. A full welcome pack that will include the 3 days activities along with tourist info for those who would like to see this historic corner of Great Britain - and more - will be available.

Week commencing 29th July –

Vessels begin to arrive – directed to inner basin eastern end to keep outer basin clear for routine high season yachting arrivals. Berthing to pontoons and then along the wall keeping the fairway clear. Craft Dressed overall.

For vessels arriving before Tuesday 30th July there is an opportunity to go into the nearby River Stour for a stay of up to two nights at Sandwich. Numbers will be limited due to the lack of space at the town quay. Pilotage necessary for entry to the river and will be by the Port of Ramsgate OGA representative Robert Holden. Entry will be as a group of vessels with a briefing beforehand. Return at your leisure.

Friday 2nd August - evening welcome address and socialising.

Saturday 3rd August – HW 10.00 BST. Gate closes at around 1200.

- 10.00 Ramsgate Lifeboats visit the fleet and socialise – subject to operational duties. Depart before gate closure. Lifeboat Hon Sec and crew visits the fleet. Crew Signing sessions.
- 12.30 On Water activities onward.
- 15.00 Mayor and dignitaries (inclg. MP, TDC Council Leader, HMaster). Formal Welcome then circulate among the fleet. On Water activities continue.
- 18.30 Relay event.

Sunday 4th August –

HW circa 10.30. Gate open circa 0830. Gate closed circa 12.30

- 0830 Short Parade of Sail entirely to the north of the shipping fairway for public spectacle (subject to wind) to Dumpton Gap / Broadstairs and back – 4 miles there and back - freestyle sailing. Return to inner basin before gate closure. Tidal window approximately 4 hours.
- 13.00 Crews Treasure Hunt around the Royal Harbour – on land. Duration 2 + hours.
- 14.00 Under 18's fender throwing competition. Ongoing till finished. Bring your own fender!
- 16.00 On pontoon Rope Splicing Race.
- 18.30 Prize giving.

Monday 5th August.

Lay over day to continue harbour spectacle and allow crews to tour the area.

Tuesday 6th August –

Onwards to Cowes. Vessels depart to next port of call – subject to weather.

Alison Cable
ECOGA

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Around the Areas OGA 50th Anniversary

Scottish Area OGA

Reaper is a sailing herring drifter of the Fife design which was the most popular design of fishing boat on the East Coast of Scotland for the greater part of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Built at Sandhaven near Fraserburgh in 1902 as a two masted lugger she is now owned and sailed by the Scottish Fisheries Museum at Anstruther on the Firth of Forth. **Reaper** is 70 ft long with a dipping lug foresail and a standing lug mizzen. She was very successful for many years at the summer herring fishing. She was first registered at Fraserburgh in 1902 (FR 958) before moving to Shetland and registered at Lerwick in 1908 (LK 707).



The picture is of the Scottish “token” that will be going round Britain as part of the OGA50 celebrations. The model is a scale of “Reaper” a well known and recently rebuilt vessel, carefully placed inside an antique Haig Dimple bottle complete with the antique cap, all fitted in the pictured presentation box.

In 1979 she was purchased by The Scottish Fisheries Museum in Anstruther where over the next few years she was restored to her original appearance and renamed **Reaper FR 958**. She is crewed and maintained by the volunteer members of the Museum’s Boats Club and makes guest and promotional appearance throughout Scotland and N E England.

Anstruther is one of the event ports in the Round Britain Challenge.

OGA Scotland had a stand at the RYA Scotland Big Weekend 2013. The event has several activities including conferences, a dinner, and the boat show and is held at the SportScotland National Centre Inverclyde in Largs. A lot of interest was shown in the OGA and this did a lot to raise our profile in Scotland.

Neal Hill
Area Secretary

The Solent Area OGA

May 4th 5th

We have all been very busy getting the boats ready early this year for the Solent Welcome event and for the RBC and Relay boats at the RAFYC, Hamble who also started the first Solent Area Gaffers Race in 1959.

What was planned as a welcome party turned out to have a right Royal flavour as well

The weekend started with the boats arriving on Friday and Saturday including seven Dutch Boats and one from the East Coast.

Some of our local members went out for a casual sail in the Solent, taking some of the RAFYC members who had never sailed in a gaffer – quite a new experience for them, especially as it was quite breezy out there.

On Saturday evening we gathered in the RAFYC bar, enjoyed a delicious supper and afterwards George Beckett and the Blunt Instruments started playing in their special style of music giving us a taste of the 1960's. It was altogether a splendid evening.

On Sunday morning we lined up our boats, dressed overall, on the River Hamble Harbour Master's midstream pontoon. HRH Prince Michael of Kent arrived at the Royal Southern Yacht Club, just next to the RAFYC, and boarded *Tahilla* one of the four Dunkirk Little Ships that had come down to the Hamble to greet HRH. Passing by the lined up gaffers, we took his attention by blowing horns, whistles, all available instruments, and including Mike Brackstone who was whirling his Gaffaphone, which brought a smile to HRH as he passed by and acknowledged the OGA 50 boats. *Tahilla* escorted by the Steam Tug *Challenge*, proceeded up Southampton Water to the Maritime Festival.



HRH Prince Michael of Kent reviews our fleet



Showing off

We returned the compliment by sailing up to Ocean Terminal, where HRH had lunched on board the SS Shieldhall, and provided a backdrop of lovely sailing vessels, with everything up and going well, and doing a close sail-by. Quite a crowd gathered to watch us from the Southampton Maritime Festival, and we showed off for three circuits before heading downstream and waved goodbye to the RBC and Relay boats who were by then anxious to sail off towards Plymouth to the next OGA50 event.

All being well we shall see them all again in August at the Cowes Jubilee Festival.

Sailing and other Events in the Solent 2013

Yogaff 2013 – May 30th to June 2nd. This year is going celebrate the Old Gaffers 50th and should be great fun, and including the gaffers race, on the Saturday, the same day this year as the annual Round The Island Race.

As we will be in Yarmouth we should all have great views of the sailing fleet as they go down to the Needles early on Saturday morning. We will be holding our Gaffers race on the Saturday afternoon

6th Cowes Classic Week – 15th – 19th July 2013 which we are all encouraged to join in as being a week of racing and very good social gatherings afterwards.

Annual Race and OGA Jubilee Festival - Thursday August 15th Sunday 18th August 2013. – The Solent Area Committee are very busy organising this party gathering of the greatest gaffers seen for many a long time. More about this in the next issue, but there is still time for anyone wanting to come to register via the OGA50 website.

Around the Areas OGA 50th Anniversary

Bursledon Regatta – is going all French this year and we are looking forward to seeing the amazing backdrop that will be staged for this weekend.

The Regatta will take place this year on 24/25 August, 2013 (dinghy racing on 24th, and yacht racing on 25th).

Rally at Bembridge 6th to 8th September 2013

We are planning a relaxing casual weekend rally at Bembridge,

Centenary Chase at Yarmouth with Royal Solent Yacht Club 21st September 2013 will follow its usual plan for a pursuit race on the Saturday afternoon, followed by supper on the RSYC

If anyone would like more information on the above Solent events then please do not hesitate to contact me.



Roma on Southampton Water



Jessica Warren
Area Secretary

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Kate

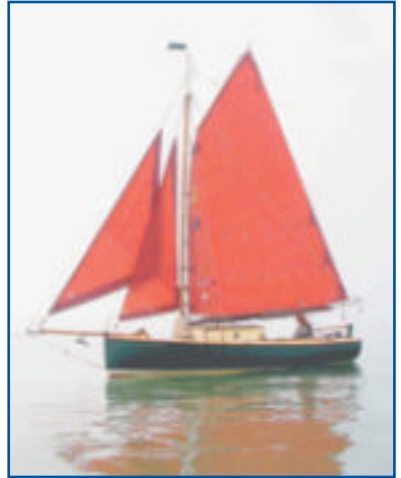
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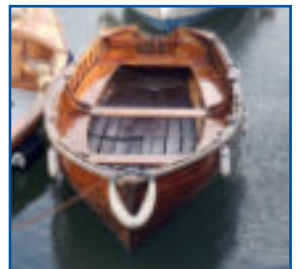
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Position	Area Code	Name	Tel. No.	Email Address
President	SOL	Mike Shaw	02036024625	president@oldgaffersassociation.org
Secretary	EC	Sue Lewis	07900242452	secretary@oldgaffersassociation.org
Treasurer	SCOG	Gordon Garman	01700505617	hontreasurer@oldgaffersassociation.org
Boat Register	SOL	Pat Dawson	01983760655	boatregister@oldgaffersassociation.org
Gaffers Log Editor	BC	Phil Slade	0033233345320	log@oldgaffersassociation.org
Membership Secretary	EC	Alistair Randall	01525 370565	membership@oldgaffersassociation.org
OGA Merchandise	EC	Ed Allen	02076074772	edallen@waitrose.com
OGA@50 Co-ordinator		L D Barry Healas	01524276258	bazhealas@tiscali.co.uk
Research Editor	BC	Viv Head		oga50book@oldgaffersassociation.org
Sailing Committee Chair	EC	Pete Thomas	01473832808	p.m.thomas@talk21.com
Social & Trophy Sec.	CNW	Sue Farrer	01270874174	cnwsec@oldgaffersassociation.org
Webmaster	CNW	Pete Farrer	01270874174	webmaster@oldgaffersassociation.org

Area Secretaries and Representatives

Bristol Channel	BC	David Owens	07793243892	welsh_freelance@yahoo.co.uk 16045967852canadasec@oldgaffersassociation.org
Canada	BCCAC	Colin Ming		
Dublin Bay	DB	John Wedick		
		00353(0)539382993		dbsec@oldgaffersassociation.org
East Coast	EC	Pete Elliston	01206391870	ecsec@oldgaffersassociation.org
France	FR	Yannie Cariguel		yannie.cariguel@oldgaffers.com
Lake District	L D	Barry Healas	01524276258	bazhealas@tiscali.co.uk
Netherlands	NL	Hans Eijgelse		secretaris@oldgaffers.nl
North East	NE	Jim Bell	01670790056	belljc2.elison@btinternet.com
North Wales	NW	Sue Farrer	01270874174	nwasec@oldgaffersassociation.org
North West	NW	Tom Middlebrook	01516529744	nwsec@oldgaffersassociation.org
Northern Ireland	NIP	Peter Lyons		solsec@oldgaffersassociation.org
Scotland	SC	Gordon	01770227950	gordon@oldgaffersassociation.org
South Wales	SW	Phil Hill	01963712629	philhill@oldgaffersassociation.org
Trailer Section	TR	Mike Stevens	01963712629	trailersec@oldgaffersassociation.org
Western Australia	WA	Alan Abbott		Editor, Baggywrinklesabbottnet@westnet.com.au

Contact Addresses

President: Mike Shaw 11 Rowfant Road, London SW17 7AP president@oldgaffersassociation.org
 Secretary: Sue Lewis 13 Long Road, Mistley, Manningtree, Essex, CO12 1HN secretary@oldgaffersassociation.org
 Editor: Phil Slade Le Bourg, Touquettes, 61550 La Ferté Fresnel, France log@oldgaffersassociation.org
 Produced by Stormcreative Publishing Ltd. Email: sales@stormcreative-now.com

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