

NO 1
OLD GAFFERS ASSOCIATION

1964/1
NEWSLETTER No. 1964/1

NOTES AND NEWS

The Association is now affiliated to the R.Y.A. At the moment we have over 100 names on our books, but only 56 completed membership forms. If you have not yet filled in a form, could you please do so. Since the costs of publishing newsletters, Association overheads and race publicity costs will not increase linearly with increasing membership, you will all get better value for your subscriptions if you can persuade more people to join.

I have tried to answer all your letters - this has not been easy, and if I have missed any of you, I do apologise. Several of you have sent me photographs of your boats. I am keeping these handy, and any gaffers visiting Maldon can be sure of a welcome at 70b, Pambridge Road any Sunday evening. I hope, over the years, to build up a collection of photographs and articles on all the boats owned by Association members. The first two descriptions are in this newsletter - please send me a description of YOUR boat. (as well as logs of cruises, letters to the Editor, etc. etc.)

BURGEEES We can not afford to carry any stock, but these can be obtained to order from Capt. O.M.Watts Ltd., 49, Albemarle St., London W.1. Until the design is published in Lloyd's register, it will be advisable to quote the design when ordering, i.e. white pitchfork on royal blue ground, with sketch to show which way up the pitchfork should be. I am uncertain of costs, as one list O.M.Watts sent mentions a 10% price increase, whilst a later list makes no mention of this, but quotes the following prices for all wool double worn Bunting burgees, roped and toggled, or fitted with eyelets:-
10", 11/- 24", 13/6 30", 15/6. Nylon wool mixture is also available at 25% extra. Prices do not include postage etc.

TIES We can get Association ties made, to sell at 15/- each in Rayon or \$1 in Terylene (plus postage) BUT we must order 4 dozen of the Rayon or 5 dozen of the Terylene. Obviously it is quite out of the question for the Association to stock these ties. If all members who would guarantee to buy a tie if and when we have some made will let me know, stating whether they would prefer Terylene or Rayon (or either) I will let you all know when sufficient guarantees have come in, and then when the money has been collected we can get the ties made. If any members would be prepared to invest in quantities of these ties for later (possible) resale to other members, I would be very glad to hear from them. (Prices on bulk purchases would be fractionally lower.)

SMALL ADS. Anyone got a surplus mainsail? Vic Tate of "Swatchway", Vicarage Lane, Great Baddow, Chelmsford, Essex is after a sail with about 15' luff and foot, and 10' head.

Mr. E.Midgley, The Bungalow, 163, Nottingham Rd. East, Hilltop, Eastwood, Notts, would be grateful for any information any member can give him on the history of "DREDA", his 10 ton lee board sloop.

Also, Tony Clarke of Bitteswell Manor, Near Rugby, Warwick is after details of his 12 ton cutter "ZOBELIDA"

Mr. R.Norris, 29 High St., Brompton, Gillingham, Kent would be grateful for any information members can provide on WHITSTABLE YAWLS.

Mr. S.Wood, 63, St.Johns Rd., Hedge End, Southampton, owner of Sea Breeze, suggests an exchange of colour prints of boats - If you are interested, please get in touch with Mr. Wood.

Mr. M.D.Millar of 107, Baker St., London, W.1 would like to hear from any owners who have had experience of reducing weight aloft by some means such as some form of goose-neck running in a track. Would any member with experience or good ideas please let Mr. Millar know, and please send in any thoughts you may have on this subject for future newsletters - it could be a most interesting topic.

DATES FOR YOUR SAILING DIARY

Sunday, June 21st. Seamanship event open to all cruisers, at Stansgate Abbey Point, River Blackwater.

Sunday, June 28th. Informal race from East Mersea to Maldon.

Open to all cruising boats, with a party on East Mersea Stone Point on the Saturday evening

Both these events are intended to be of interest to owners of "gaffers" and other cruising yachts. Full details will be sent out with the next newsletter.

Saturday, July 18th. East Coast Old Gaffers Race. 10 - 0 a.m. at Osea Pier, R. Blackwater.

Saturday, July 25th. Probable date for an Old Gaffers Race on the Medway. More details later.

At the time of printing, the date of the Solent Race has not been settled.

J.A.Scarlett

As a start to the O.G.A. Catalogue of Gaffers, here are details of the two largest boats in the Association. (Written by the owners.)

ISABEL 108427 78 ton T.M. Ketch. Lgth.63ft., Beam 18ft., Depth 6ft. Engine - Ruston and Hornsby 64 BHP., giving speed of 5½ knots. Built at Milford by Hancock in 1897, she sailed out of Appledore for the early part of her life and is pictured in Basil Greenhill's excellent book "The Merchant Schooners". In 1914 - 1918 she was used by the Admiralty at Devonport, and again for the second war in 1940-45 During her war service in 1915 she suffered a serious fire and was rebuilt from the waterline up in teak taken from a man-o-war being broken up nearby. Between the wars she was used to carry cargoes around the Bristol Channel and the Brittany Coast.

In 1946 she was converted by Mashfords of Plymouth to a yacht, with pine T.andG.panelling throughout, and 30 tons of clean stone and iron was laid in her bilges as ballast.

She then cruised the North Sea and Baltic and later returned to the Solent where she remained based until I bought her in June 1962. I sailed her from Poole to Gravesend where the mainmast was unstepped by a friendly crane. The mast with standing rigging weighed about 2½ tons. I then went under power to Cubitts Yacht Basin to carry out the slow process of burning off and repainting her, replacing tired timber and generally doing those things which ought to be done if a ship is to look her best for another 66 years.

In the spring we sail to Conyer Quay on the Swale to continue the process of restoration.

M.Logan

SERVABO 149000 64 ton T.M. Ketch. Lgth 70 ft., Beam 16.3ft., Depth 7.6ft.

Servabo was the last Sailing Trawler to be built in Brixham. She was built by R.Jackman in 1927 for a Mr.Tom Adams. She was the second boat built for this owner and he had many of his own ideas built into the ship. She was built to race as well as fish and when first launched she proved very slow. After trimming and working up over a few years she proved quite fast, winning the King George V Cup one year and coming second behind "Guess Again" in another race.

After fishing for nine or ten years she was converted to a yacht and a 30 H.P. Kelvin engine was fitted. It is believed that shortly after this she went to Ireland and on the way back was damaged through straining during a gale because only one man was on deck and he could not reduce sail on his own. She spent nine weeks in the shipyard being refitted and was once again sailing in the Channel.

We do not know what she was doing during the war but after the war she was used for charter work from Plymouth. From here she was sold and taken up to Scotland where she was used for charter cruises in the Western Isles. At about this time her rig was altered from normal gaff and boom rig to a brailing rig with standing gaffs but retaining the booms.

While in Scotland her owner was drowned and she laid for some four years without very much being done to her. We took her over in January 1962 and brought her to the Solent. After a refit and various alterations to make her easier to work, we started holiday cruises in the Channel. Over the past two seasons we have covered over 6,000 miles and find her a very good seaboat and very easy to work with the brailing rig.

I.J.Barrett

SERVABO'S RUN FROM SCOTLAND TO THE SOLENT, FEBRUARY, 1962.

We took over Servabo at the beginning of 1962. She was then hauled out at Robertsons yard at Sandbank on the Holy Loch. I went up with a friend on 6th. January to get her ready to come south at the beginning of February.

Having been laid up for three or four years she was in rather neglected condition. After we had rerigged her and painted her bottom time was getting short so as we managed to get the engine running reasonably well we decided to leave an overhaul until she reached her home port.

My partner and a friend joined us on February 6th thus bringing the crew up to four. Our sailing date was set for February 8th. At 1415 we motored away from Robertsons yard and set off down the Clyde. The engine pushed us along at a steady $5\frac{1}{2}$ knots against a force 3 S.W. breeze. As we passed down the river the hills were capped with snow and although cold on deck we were snug enough below with the coal fire going well. By 2000 we were past Holy Island and meeting a fairly heavy head sea. The mizzen and staysails were set and we spent the night beating out of the Clyde. Rain showers made visibility poor at times and one of the crew went down with sea sickness.

By daybreak we were clear of the Clyde and made a leg out to sea. Once we were well offshore we tacked ship and set the mainsail and jib at 0900. The engine was stopped and we bowled off down the coast with a force 4 W.breeze. At 1000 the topsail and tow foresail were set. During this operation I lost my hat from the end of the gaff while clearing a fouled topsail sheet. The loss was felt for the rest of the trip.

During the morning our sick friend came on deck for a while but retired below. The wind stayed steady all day and we ran on down the coast until 0200 on the 10th when we tacked off the Skerries. The wind now shifted to S.W. force 4-5 and we made good time across to the Kish Lightship. Then we tacked ship again and ran down the Irish coast. Soon the wind shifted to N.W. - 4 and in brilliant sunshine we sailed along at a steady 5 knots.

By 2300 the Tuskar Light was abeam and as the midnight forecast was for N.W. force 3 we decided to stand on for Lands End. By 0400 on the 11th. the wind had dropped right away so we started the engine and pushed on. The forecast the next morning was not so good, being S.W.x W. gale imminent. However, having come so far we decided to continue.

We decided to make out to sea as much as possible so as to have searoom once the wind shifted. All morning the wind increased and worked round from N.W. to S.W.x W. As the wind increased we reduced sail until we were slashing along under full main, mizzen, staysail and No.2 jib. By midday the wind was S.W.-W., 7-8 and the sea was rising fast, but the ship was riding very well.

At 1400 we were well out to sea and ran off for the Seven Stones Lightship. At this time we took off the mizzen, not without some difficulty as the wind was by now force 8 gusting to 9.

Without the mizzen and engine the ship ran very well on a reach. From 1900 to 2200 the third hand took the deck while my partner and I snatched a bit of sleep. At 2200 we were given a shout by Ted who by then had had more than enough of steering on his own. The Seven Stones was in sight and soon all the other lights showed up to guide us. Ted, the third hand dived into his bunk with a large rum inside him. John, the fourth hand was still very sick and had kept to his bunk the whole day. This left Dave and myself to run the ship. Once round the corner we ran off as much as we dared without gybing and found our course would take us to the Channel Islands.

We decided to try to run for the Channel Islands and find some smooth water to come round in. By now the ship was running very fast and surfing at times. This was an extraordinary sensation aboard a ship of this size but we were getting pretty tired and the rig was so arranged that we could not reduce sail without coming head to wind and we felt that at the time this could be very dangerous with the sea that was running. At midnight we had some coffee and hard boiled eggs. Shortly after this we took a heavy roll and the stove hit the floor with a resounding clatter.

At 0225 on the 12th the ship took charge and went out of control. The helm hard over made no difference and we gybed all standing. After

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picking ourselves up, we had a look round the gear and found the ship lying quietly hove to. The only damage that resulted from the gybe was one broken topmast backstay.

Having sorted things out we got the ship under way again and headed for Plymouth. We arrived off the Sound at 1000 and came to the wind under the lee of the land to get the gear off.

Ted and John were persuaded to give us a hand to get the sails off and after a good deal of struggling we got the mainsail and staysail off. We then ran on up the harbour under jib, while Dave tried to get the engine going. The engine started but as soon as we went into gear the gearbox locked solid. We then decided to sail into Sutton Pool. The wind was very fluky under the land but we managed to reach the entrance to the pool and with the aid of a pluck from a fishing boat we berthed at the first dock and went to pay our respects to the Harbour Master. The next call was to a local pub for a much needed pint.

Ted decided to leave us at Plymouth as he had strained his chest and stomach with too much steering, so I contacted my brother who came down to help us on the last leg of the run.

We spent most of the 13th recovering and working on the engine. The damage to the gearbox was too much to put right without sending to Glasgow for spare parts, so we decided to sail the rest of the way to the Hamble.

On the 14th February we prepared for sea and got under weigh at 1010. We dropped out of Sutton Pool under easy sail and rounded up outside to get the rest of the gear on. Once under way we made very fast time out of the Sound in a snow squall. Once the squall passed we set the topsail and ran up the coast with a N.W. force 5 wind.

Off Salcombe another squall came down and we got the tow foresail off, but there was no time to get more sail off. Servabo laid over until her bulwarks were under water and really tore along for 10 minutes or so until the squall eased.

After this the run up the coast was quiet but very cold. We came in through the Needles at 0600 on the 15th and anchored at the entrance to the Hamble at 0730. The wind had shifted into the north so we decided to get a tow up the river instead of trying to beat. The launch arrived at 0900 and at 1000 we berthed at Bursledon at the end of our voyage.

The times and distances for this run were as follows:-
Sandbank to Plymouth, 54½ miles by log in 3days, 19hours, 45minutes.
Plymouth to Bursledon, 140 miles by log in 24 Hours including tow up Hamble River. These figures seem to show quite a good average speed for a fishing boat mainly under sail.

I.J.Barrett

SHIPWRIGHT'S CORNER

For a bedding material that will not set, take 20 parts of household putty, mix in ½ part of red lead powder (remembering that red lead is poisonous, and the powder can blow all over the place if you are not careful.) then add 1 part of linseed oil and 2 of old motor grease.

V.Tate (Owner & converter of Aark)

For those who prefer to buy their "goo", the products of Messrs. Secomastic Ltd., have never let me down. Two grades, - B.C.48 and K. One is a black compound for under water work, which will bleed through paint, and one for work above the waterline over which one can safely paint. They are a bit too sticky for stopping the seams of a carvel hull, but are ideal for bedding and for stopping splits in old planked hulls. I have used them since 1957, and haven't had any of it set hard yet. There are filthy to handle, but dissolve in paraffin.

J.A.S.

Any hints, tips, or descriptions of work done will be welcome for this item. Especially, let us know if you have tried out any newer materials.

I am sending you alla membership form with this newsletter (Partly to get a blank side on which to write the address) If you have already sent in your form, please pass this one on to a friend. If you have not sent in a form, do not worry about a proposer or seconder - this newsletter is being sent only to those who have been (provisionally) made members on the strength of letters sent in.

THE OLD GAFFERS ASSOCIATION

The Association exists to encourage interest in traditional gaff rig, to help the owners of gaff rigged boats in every possible way, and to organise annual races and rallies for gaff rigged boats in all areas where there are sufficient owners interested. The annual subscription is ten shillings. Membership is open to all owners of gaff rigged boats, and to those interested in gaff rig. All members will receive copies of the Association newsletters.

Please complete the membership form and standing order to your banker in block letters and return both to the Hon. Secretary, Mr. J.A.Scarlett, Lawley, 70 B, Fambridge Road, Maldon, Essex.

I wish to become a member of the Old Gaffers Association, and agree to abide by the rules of the Association.

Signed

Name

'Phone No. Office

Address

Home

Name of Boat

Sail No.

Rig

Type or Class

Size

(tons)

Year built
(if known)

Builder

Designer

Where built

I am a member of the following Yacht Clubs;-

I normally sail in the area.

Would you be willing to help organise races in your area? YES / NO

STANDING ORDER

To

(Bankers)

Address

On receipt of this order, and thereafter on the first day of January each year, until cancelled by me in writing, please pay the sum of ten shillings to the Co-operative Wholesale Society Limited, Bankers, Chelmsford Branch, 50, New London Road, Chelmsford, Essex, for the account of the Old Gaffers Association, Account No. M022, and debit my account accordingly.

Signed

.....

2d

stamp

Date

.....



Southernhampton

Hedge End,

63, St Johns Rd,

Heat Bank,

J. Wood Esq

