

NO 9
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1965/4
OLD GAFFERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER No. 1965/4

The Committees have invited Francis B. Cooke to be an Honorary Member of the Association, and Mr. Cooke has accepted the invitation. Francis B. Cooke must be very well known to all who are interested in gaff rig, and many of us must have learnt much of our basic seamanship from reading his books on sailing. Now in his 94th year, Mr. Cooke is the same age as our two oldest boats on the East Coast, and he still takes great interest in the doings of the boats he has known and loved. We are very pleased and honoured that Mr. Cooke has shown so much interest in the O.G.A.

We also welcome the following new members:-

S. Bavins, 29, Jedburgh Road, Plaistow, London E.13.

R.H. Beazer, White Cottage, Entry Hill, Bath.
Seaway

L.R. Cross, 56, Cranleigh Gardens, Luton, Beds.
Pintail

Wing Cmdr. J. Fleetwood, D.S.O., April Cottage, Hindon,
Salisbury, Wilts. Nancy Grey

S. Fraser, 13, Model Cottages, London, S.W.14.

K.E. Hudson, Morden Park Cottage, Wareham, Dorset
Freya II

C.M. Jefferson, Tamarisk, West Strand, West Wittering,
Chichester, Sussex. Patsy

E. Keeble, 33a, Radnor Drive, Wallasey, Cheshire.
Reedbird

P.E. Seale, 143, Harefield Road, Uxbridge, Middlesex.
Jean II

E.W. Spears, 34, Hill Crescent, Bexley, Kent.
De Brandeman

R.C. Stafford, 43, Claremont Road, Ealing, London W.13.
Keg

J.S. Sunnucks, Rectory Cottage, Martlesham, Woodbridge,
Suffolk. Alice and Florrie.

P.J. Willey, Yt. Vera, Bell's Boatyard, Brundall, Norfolk.
Vera

D. Windram, 76, Elm Close, Hayling Island, Hants.
Wendy May

S. Yager, 1, Montagu Court, Montagu Square, London, W.1.

With the continued growth of the Association, I am finding it difficult to maintain the same close personal contact with all members. 'Automated' addressing of these Newsletters helps a bit, but although I try to keep up to date with correspondence, I fear that some of you are long overdue for replies to letters you have sent me. Please accept my apologies. The spirit is willing, but there are only 24 hours in a day!

Since the publication of the lists of members, there have been several changes in boats owned. Brian Allen has bought the three and a half ton cutter Poseidon; Eric Payne has sold the three tonner Rainbow to Peter Butler; Hugh Birley has sold Cleone out of the Assn. and bought the 7 ton cutter Niona; D.C. Salcombe has sold the Quay Punt Phillippa to T.W. Hallam, who has promised to join the O.G.A.; Mike Peyton has sold the Colin Archer Sugar Creek, and John Crabb has sold the 7 ton Prawner Curlew, the last two having been sold out of the Assn.

It will help to keep the records straight if all members buying or selling boats could let me have details of the changes, and if you sell a boat to a non member, please try and persuade him to join the O.G.A.

As the list of members names, addresses and boats is now badly out of date, I have given up sending new members copies of the original list, and am hoping to prepare a new list in the new year.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

EAST COAST MEETING. This will be on Saturday, November 20th, at the Maldon Little Ship Club, the Hythe, Maldon, at 7-30 p.m. There will be a show of colour slides taken during this year's race, and any members who have slides are asked to bring them along. There will be a cold buffet at 5/- per head. Would as many members as possible please let me know how many supper tickets they would like (see last page). Money in advance would be a great help, but we are not insisting on this, and tickets will be issued on the evening. If you have not put in an advance booking, please do not think there will be nothing for you if you do turn up. Our last two parties at the M.L.S.C. have been great successes, and we are hoping for a record attendance this year. We shall be delighted to see members from other areas who can get over to Maldon.

SOLENT AREA MEETING It is hoped to be able to hold a social meeting on December 4th, possibly at Emsworth. Members will be circularised with details nearer the date.

GENERAL MEETING IN LONDON. This will be on Saturday, January 15th, at the Cruising Association rooms in Chiltern Court, Baker Street, at 7-30 p.m. It is hoped as many members as possible will come along to meet those from other areas.

The date is the last day of the Boat Show at Earls Court. Members visiting the show on that day can rendezvous at the bar near the Society of Marine Artists Exhibition (I think it is the Warwick Bar) at Noon, 2 p.m., 4p.m., and 6 p.m. Please wear O.G.A. ties !

FRENCH RALLY The Solent area committee are considering a Rally to the Yacht Club at Le Havre next Whitsun (May 30th)., and would like to know how many members would be interested. Members not sailing over could go by ferry from Southampton (55/- single) to join the party. If you are interested, please fill in the questionnaire on the last page.

CHRISTMAS CARDS These can be printed at 9/- per dozen, black on white, without envelopes, and will contain a seasonal message. Members can have their addresses printed inside the cards at an extra charge of:-

Up to 3 dozen cards - 6/-
3 doz. to 6 doz. - 2d per card
Over 6 doz. cards - 12/- the lot.

There are three picture blocks available:-

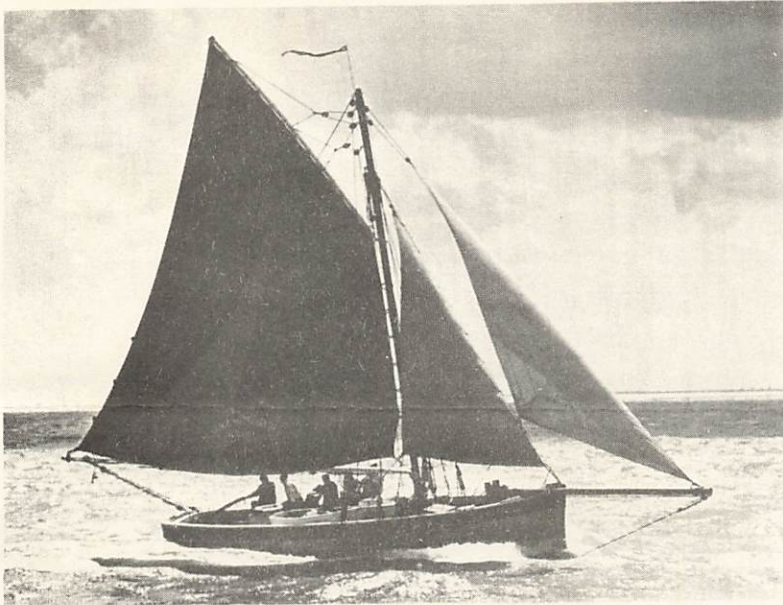
- A The line drawing used on the Race Supper Tickets
- B Ianthe II setting a square topdail in the 1964 E.C.Race.
- C Morna in the 1964 Solent Race

I must give the printer a minimum order of four dozen from any one block, so will any member ordering less than four dozen cards please give an alternative choice of block.

There are also three small blocks of Alan, Nereid II and Firefly in this year's E.C.Race. It is possible that any two or even three of these small blocks could be used on a card, but there might have to be an extra charge for mounting the blocks, which would have to be agreed with members ordering such cards.

There is an order form on the last page.

1965 East Coast Old Gaffers Race

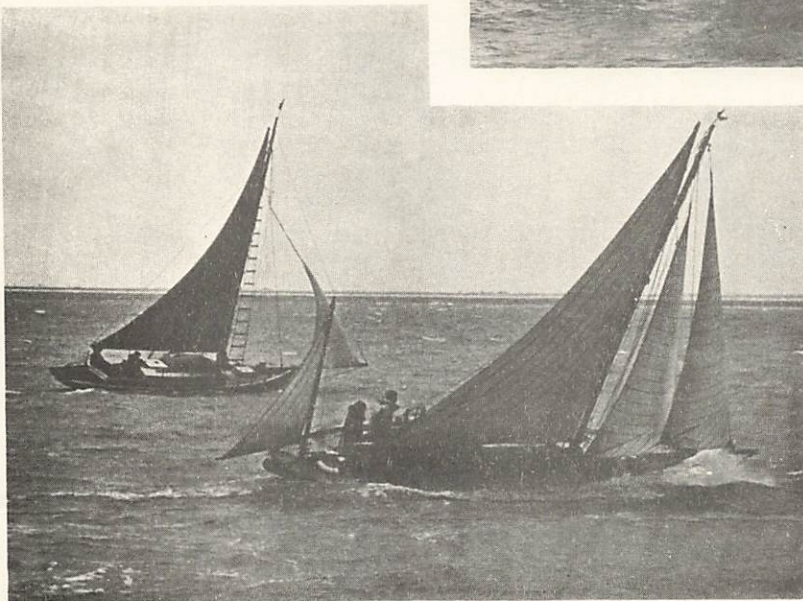


BERTHA
FIRST HOME

Winner of the
**TOM BOLTON
MEMORIAL CUP.**

MARY

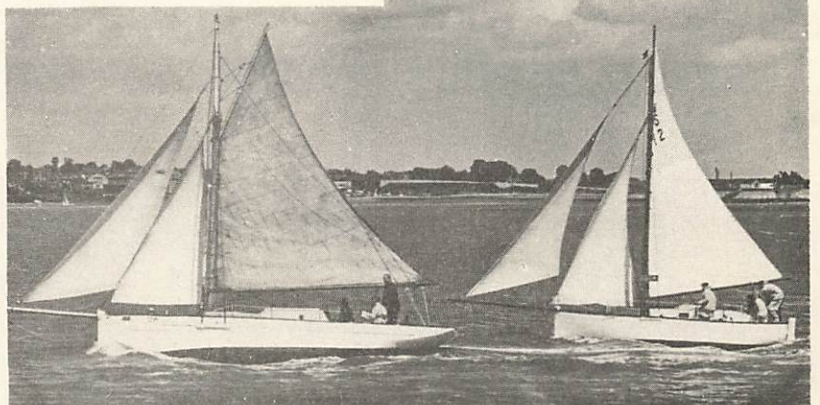
Winner of the
**LIFERAFT HIRE COMPANY
SEAMANSHIP CUP.**



CLYTHIE
3rd Class 1
&
NEREID II
2nd Class 2

**TAFFY & FANNY
OF COWES**

Winner overall
&
E.C. OLD GAFFERS TROPHY.



SOLENT RACE Unfortunately, I was touring Scotland with my Australian Step Brother on September 11th, so I missed what sounds like the best yet Old Gaffers Race. Certainly the entry set a new high level. Let us hope it will be even better next year.

The race started on a run in a force 3 wind, and our President was soon in the lead with Maresca, followed closely round the N. Stourbridge Buoy by Lady Belle, White Bell, Romilda and Quiver. Melmore and Ardea found themselves in a tight squeeze rounding the mark, but just managed to keep their bowsprits clear of all dangers.

An increased wind against the tide forced some of the boats to change to smaller headsails - Isis had a spot of bother, and Ardea blew out a genoa and gave her crew a bath. At this time it looked like being the bigger boats race, but the wind dropped off until some were merely drifting with the tide, and Sirius drifted onto the Brambles.

A further change of wind with some thunder gave less pleasant conditions, and on one occasion two boats on opposite tacks were seen sailing in the same direction. Romilda had some trouble which lost her several places; Freya went aground and had to winch off, and Senechal managed to sail clear after finding the putty.

Maresca led the fleet home (Nice to have a President who leads the way round the races!), followed by Saga, Lady Belle, and Melmore, but Maresca's handicap was just a shade too big to put her in the prize list.

The Channel Cup (Now awarded to the first boat over 50 years old) was won by Quiver, with Lady Belle and Ardea second and third in the class, and the Channel Plate for 'Juveniles' under fifty went to Saga, with Trammel and Melmore second and third.

Final placings on corrected time were;- (Times in Minutes)

1	Saga	D.Lord	290.3
2	Quiver	M.D.Millar	310.3
3	Lady Belle	J.B.Pot	311.1
4	Ardea	W.D.Robinson	313.5
5	Trammel	W.Tucker	313.9
6	Maresca	J.S.Clarke	314.7
7	Mandy	S.Fraser	317.7
8	Senechal	D.R.McGilvray	339.2
9	Isis	C.F.A.Green	343.4
10	Melmore	A.A.Muirhead	355.7
11	Romilda	F.W.Hillier	376
12	Guiding Star	J.B.A.Glennie	384.6

Other boats finishing after the time limit at 1800 were;-

Jean Ann	P.A.Clarke	342
Poseidon	B.Allen	348
White Bell	W.D.Perriment	353.8
Sea Widgeon	D.Barlow	360
Pintail	L.R.Cross	367
Magnesta	P.St.J.Foggo	368
Seaway	R.M.Beazer	390
Freya II	K.Hudson	420
De Dobber	R.S.Wood	435

Prinses Margriet (R.D.de Sola), Hypatia, (H.D.Rose) and Piskie (T.Wilkinson) retired.

A depressingly large number of boats were not accounted for after the race. It may be that they finished, but they were not observed from the Committee Boat, and no declaration forms have been received.

PLEASE, if you enter for a race, do let the committee know where you got to as soon as possible. No organiser likes to feel there are any 'loose ends' after a race, and quite a lot of time and worry can be wasted chasing after non-starters and boats that have retired

Also, please do send me your accounts of the races for the Newsletters. The more we hear from all of you, the better reports we can give, and the better records we can keep. J.A.S.

CATALOGUE OF GAFFERS

PATIENCE Off No. 124596. 5 Ton yawl designed and built by W.E.Thomas of Falmouth in 1906. Her vital statistica are 28ft. L.O.A., 22ft. L.W.L., 7.2ft. Beam and 4.9ft. draft.

In fact Mr. Thomas was only partially responsible for the design as she is a miniature edition of the 9 ton yawl Dawn (at present stationed at Dartmouth) designed by the late G.U.Laws for a Mr.Algar and built by Thomas in 1905. No doubt Thomas used the Dawn lines as a basis for a half model from which Patience was built, and her sections show more than a suggestion of the Falmouth Quay Punt type despite her attractive spoon bow, cut away forefoot and conoe stern.

She is one of the surviving yachts from the days during the early part of the century when the yachting author Francis B. Cooke and his friends sailed from the old Fambridge Yacht Club, which was not revived after the First World War due, amongst other things, to the high casualty rate of its members during that conflict. She was built for the late F.E. Griffiths-Letts and R.D.Ronald (Mr.Ronald at that time being Vice Commodore of the Club) and was completed in December 1906 as a successor to Snipe (Lost in 1963 with Tom Bolton aboard) which the joint owners had bought from Mr.Cooke in 1901.

She was not commissioned until 1907 and her history therefore dates from that year when in the spring she was brought up to Gravesend on the deck of a steamer, where she was discharged overside. The joint owners, accompanied by the late Cyril Ionides (The Commodore of the Fambridge Club and author of the book Floating Home, the first of its kind to describe living aboard a Thames spritsail barge) then proceeded to rig her and sail her to Fambridge via Havengore Creek. As Patience draws nearly 5 feet of water it is not surprising that she got ashore at the entrance to the creek the crew having followed the advice of a barge skipper proceeding on the same route and who purported to draw 6 feet. This resulted in the yacht being neaped for a fortnight but she eventually got off and was brought safely on the remainder of her journey to Fambridge.

She was sailed from that station until 1909 when she was sold to a Naval Officer, Lt.R.A.Preston, and was then stationed in the Plymouth area up to and including the First World War. After the war she seems to have been owned by a Colonel Strong, sailing out of Lymington, until purchased in 1923 by T.H.Perrott who was the owner who really made a name for her.

It was Tom Perrott who installed her first auxiliary engine, a 3½ H.P. Kelvin with no reverse or neutral and a folding propeller. This, he tells me, was to enable him to get through the Dutch canals with convenience but for sea work it was virtually useless other than in a flat calm. As it was, with no reverse he always had a kedge anchor ready at the stern in case a canal bridge which he had expected to open didn't at the last moment. The present certificate of registry dates from that time as she had to be re-registered when the engine was installed. The original Certificate of

Registry, which I have never seen, and of which one day I hope to get a copy, is presumably still lodged with the Customs House at Falmouth.

In 1925 Tom Perrott and two friends took her from Bembridge to the Baltic via the Dutch canals (as already explained), skirting the Frisian Islands and through the Kiel Canal to Svendborg in Denmark. During the winter of 1925 to 1926 she was laid up at Svendborg, in the care of the Weber family who ran the local yacht yard in those days. Mr. Perrott still has, together with his original pencilled logs, a most amusing letter from Mr. Weber discussing the fitting out of the yacht for the 1926 season. It was the Danish custom in those days to erect a kind of portable shed over a yacht during the laying up season, and although I cannot recall the exact figure for a complete renewal of paint and varnish right down to bare wood, it was a ridiculously low figure by present day standards.

In 1926 the friends rejoined the yacht in Svendborg and proceeded to sail to the Eastern Baltic States visiting what was then Danzig, Latvia, Lithuania and returning to Gothenburg via Stockholm, the Swedish Lakes, and Gota Canal. The intention was also to visit Mariehamn in the Aaland Islands, the home of the famous Erikson sailing ship fleet, but time did not permit. Such a cruise may today be fairly commonplace but at that time it was considered a voyage of some distinction, as indeed it was, and Mr. Perrott, who is a member of the Royal Cruising Club, was awarded the Club's Romola Cup for that year. In 1927 Mr. Perrott again submitted his log for competition but in that year he was not successful despite a very exciting and interesting cruise from Gothenburg to Ramsgate via the Danish archipelago and the Kiel and Dutch canals once again. For those who are interested, a full account of these two cruises may be read in the Royal Cruising Club Journals for 1926 and 1927.

After the return to England a curious thing happened. At the close of the 1927 season the yacht being again on the market, she was re-purchased by F.E. Griffiths-Letts, one of the original partners who had had her built exactly twenty one years earlier. One wonders why he ever sold her in the first place.

Patience continued in Mr. Griffiths-Letts ownership for a number of years, and there were two further owners prior to the outbreak of the Second World War, at which time she was owned by a Mr. Donkin, then Commodore of the Crouch Yacht Club. It is strange that a West Country boat should have spent the major portion of her life on the East Coast apart from the interlude from 1909 to 1927, and she has always been associated with the Burnham River.

Since this last war she has had three owners, and I am now the fourth. It was in 1955 that her original Kelvin engine was removed and replaced by one of the same make, of $7\frac{1}{2}$ H.P. and of almost as ancient vintage. Still without a gearbox, this hideous but well made piece of marine mechanism is at present lying happily rusting away in my tool shed at home. In my humble opinion it is quite unsuitable for a vessel of Patience's lines and space below decks and I would sooner be without pending the installation of something more modern.

Patience has now reached a stage in her career when most yachts are considered well past their prime, but she was exceptionally strongly constructed of good materials. Unfortunately she has been let go in recent years despite her post war role of 'family nurse' to two owners and the time has come for a major re-fit - which in fact has been

going on for the last couple of years. As many owners will appreciate it is very slow work indeed for a family man, if it is to be done thoroughly, but some progress is made each weekend at Maldon, and it is hoped that in the not too far distant future she will be restored to her original conception of a 5 ton West Country yawl with no engine (at least for the time being), no frills, and the accent on simplicity both above and below decks. One of these days she will again be sailing the seas as a symbol of a less commercial and more tranquil age.

Peter Mather.

VERA Off. No. 114902. Nine ton, transom sterned cutter, designed and built by Forrest of Wivenhoe in 1893, of pitch pine on oak, carrying about 850 square feet of canvas, and now fitted with a 30 H.P. petrol/parafin engine.

She was built for a marine artist by the name of Tewke and until 1920 she was kept at Dover and on the South Coats, then for a couple of years she was used for fishing out of Grimsby. In 1922 she was bought by a shipowner, a Mr. Stamp who re-fitted her and raced her with the Royal Yorkshire Club, of which he was Commodore. Mr. Stamp had a paid crew, and when I met the skipper, now aged 98, he told me he raced Vera for some 22 years.

After the death of Mr. Stamp the boat changed hands to a Mr. Burton, a dental surgeon of Birmingham, in 1946. I have no information on this period.

In 1952 a Mr. Taylor of Nottingham and his son bought the boat sunk in Grimsby harbour, took her home on a low loader and spent two years working on her on a piece of land near his home in Nottingham. They removed the 1912 Napier engine and fitted the present engine; bored the shaft through the sternpost as the previous engine had driven through the quarter; and did all the long and tedious work of sanding off hull etc. Both Mr. Taylor and his son were practically in the divorce courts before they abandoned the project, but wherever the boat is, Mr. Taylor always has a look at her at least once a year.

We have now had her for six years. I completely gutted the interior and re-fitted her for living aboard, as she was pipe cot style inside.

As I was coming up the Yare from Yarmouth to Norwich, I tied up at Reedham, when I was hailed by a Mr. Beeson, who told me he had often raced against Vera in the 1920s, being the ex designer, builder and owner of a boat called High Seas. He is now building a fantastic 50ft. ketch in his back garden - a sight that has to be seen to be believed.

Peter J. Willey.

URGENTLY WANTED Contributions for Newsletters. Some of you must have made some interesting cruises in the last couple of years ! We can copy photographs to illustrate articles, but prints sent must have good contrast. Quarter Plate or slightly smaller is the best size.

Please support the Newsletter - we have struggled on through two years, but it IS a struggle, and only once have I had enough 'main features' in hand for two issues.

Don't worry about style, spelling etc., - it is the subject matter that counts. Articles on construction, repairs, rigging etc will be especially welcome. We don't expect expert advice on these topics, just things as YOU see them.

the haze, but then we were soon dropping a buoyed anchor among the moorings.

From the Green Man at low tide, we saw that we had confused the withies at the entrance of the creek and had gaily sailed over the high spit of mud as we came in - it was not my imagination that the boat had shuddered!

There was plenty of activity the next morning with visiting yachts running aground all over the place and heavy rain complicating proceedings. We went ashore for supplies and waited until the landlord decided that there was enough water in the channel for us to leave safely.

In a flat calm we motored to the Bench Head Buoy while waiting for the tide to fill the Ray Sand Channel, then we turned and had a clear run to the Crouch. A light Easterly blew us into the river, then veered and blew hard S.W. We did not fancy working overtime against wind and tide so stowed the sails and motored to Pagglesham, where we boiled up all spare tins of food into a horrible concoction and washed it down in the Plough and Sail.

On our last day we ran ashore by the Customs shed at Burnham, and while she floated off we went ashore for a good meal, then we sailed sedately up with the tide to pick up the mooring, and so finished another enjoyable cruise.

L.J. Warren.

Glad Times - 5 ton cutter, Designed by John Leather, built by Wyatt of West Mersea, 1961 - copy of an Essex smack type.

GAFFERS ON THE MEDWAY

Unfortunately the Medway Regatta clashed with our own East Coast Race, so both events probably lost entrants. Colonel Bloomer of Twilight has sent the following account of the Medway Race.

The start was at 1020 hrs. from Gillingham Pier (also the finishing point) and we went down to a buoy just off Sheerness and back. Low water was at 1513 hrs, so we roared down in an hour and then spent three hours beating back over the ebb and doing our best to cheat the tide by creeping in shore.

The order at the first mark was Good Intent (12 Tons), Twilight (8 Tons), Charm (10 Tons), Foam (3 Tons) and Eider Duck (6 Tons), but there was very little between us and, in fact, after the first two tacks against the tide there was not a hundred yards between the five of us. It was an amazing race back, rather like small one design class racing, and at one time or another every boat was in the lead except Eider Duck.

We finished up almost as close except that both Good Intent and Eider Duck ran aground almost on top of each other and within half a mile of the finish. However, I do not think this altered the corrected finishing times which put Foam as winner, with Charm second and Twilight third. The order of actually crossing the line was Charm, Twilight and Foam.

B.G.B.

FOR SALE MARISHKA Winner of the 1963 Solent O.G. Race. 7 ton cutter, 27'6" x 6'6" x 5'. Designed by Fife and built by Morris and Lorrimer at Sandbank in 1895. Based on the lines of a Loch Fyne fishing vessel. Carvel planked in inch pitch pine copper fastened on double two inch square grown oak frames with two two by one bent timbers between each. Pine decks, teak trim, and all ballast lead on the keel. 7/9 H.P. Coventry Victor deisel. (These details are taken from the last time Marishka changed hands. The engine etc. might have been changed since then. J.S.) For price and further details, apply to

Bursledon Brokerage and Marine Ltd., Bursledon Bridge, Southampton, Hants.

Automated addressing of Newsletters - If the address on your newsletter is not absolutely correct, please let me know.

J.A.S.