



OLD GAFFERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER No. 1967/1

First a welcome to the following new members:-

- S. G. Bishop, 3c Clifton Terrace, Southend-on-Sea, Essex.
Betty II
- R. Caeils, "Pippins", Bourne Hill, Ipswich, Suffolk.
Vivette II
- J. Crellin, Deacons Boatyard, Bursledon, Southampton.
Wild Duck
- A. H. Davis, "Wyndways", Plumptre Lane, Danbury, Essex.
Campion
- G. R. Dunn, Great Downs, Tollesbury, Essex.
The Saith
- A. H. Evans, 14 St. Anthony's Drive, Chelmsford, Essex.
- T. N. MacKean, Pillarbox Cottage, Toothill, Romsey, Hants.
Marishka
- F. Mullville, Little Beeleigh Farm, Maldon, Essex.
Girl Stella
- Mrs. R. J. Needham, 33 All Saints Road, Creeting St. Mary,
Suffolk.
- P. C. Rose, c/o Gouldens, 40 Chancery Lane, London, W.C.2.
Odd Times

EAST COAST AREA BUSINESS MEETING will be held at 70b Fambridge Road, Maldon, at 7.30 p.m. on Sunday, April 23rd. Final details of the E. C. Race to be settled, also venue and date for summer rally in home waters. Shotley has been suggested. A volunteer is required to handle the details of the supper and prizegiving after the race.

SPRING RALLY AT OSTEND on May 27th, 28th and 29th. Final details are still to be settled. Would all owners interested in attending please contact the Hon. Secretary as soon as possible. If you have space to carry any passengers, or require crew members, please let me know. Also, any members who would like to crew on other owners' boats please contact me.

SOLENT AREA VISIT TO LE HAVRE - Would members not able to attend the main Association events on May 27th or July 15th, but who would like to visit Le Havre on one of these dates please contact either myself or W. D. Robinson, Afzelia, 8 The Rookery, Emsworth, as soon as possible, stating:

- a) If a visit was arranged for May 27th, would you attend?
- b) If a visit was arranged for July 14th, would you attend?
- c) Which date would you prefer?

EAST COAST RACE Saturday, July 15th, start 9.30 a.m. at the Stone Sailing Club Line. S.S.C. will be opening their bar for us on the Friday evening, so quite a good party should develop. A launch service will be available on the Saturday morning for ferrying crews aboard.

This year will see the real start of Class 3 for open boats and very small cruisers, as an anonymous donor has commissioned Mr. G. Dunn of Tollesbury to engrave a most beautiful glass trophy as a class prize, to be known as the Zetland Trophy. This is a work of art which any owner will be delighted to have in his possession for a year. There will be a meeting on Sunday, June 11th to settle the final details of entry for Class 3. Broadly, this class includes all open boats, three quarter deckers, and any boats under 20 ft. overall length.

SOLENT AREA ROUND THE ISLAND RACE Sunday, July 29th, starting at Yarmouth, finishing at the forts off Seaview.

SOLENT AREA RACE The date of this event has had to be altered to Saturday, September 16th. Full details later.

Other Solent Area events will include a rally at Chichester Harbour in June, and at the Folly Inn in October. Details later.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11th will be the date for a social event at the Maldon Little Ship Club. There will be the usual buffet supper, but a very special attraction, which will be of real interest to all interested in Old Gaffers has been arranged. It might be necessary to limit the numbers for this event, so all members interested are advised to contact the Secretary. Members in other areas will find this event well worth attending.

LONDON MEETING - This event was very poorly attended - in fact for the number who came along, it was not worth having booked the room for the evening. We want to give members from all areas a chance to meet each other at a central function, and to have a full say in the way the Association ticks. It would seem that the arrangements this year were not to the liking of many members, so would members please let us know what form they would like an annual meeting in London to take.

As some very important matters were settled at the meeting, a full report follows.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the OLD GAFFERS ASSOCIATION held in the Dining Room of the R.N.V.R. Club, 38 Hill Street, London, W.1. on January 7th, 1967. The chair was taken by the President, Captain J. S. Clarke, R.N.R., and the meeting was attended by 19 members and their guests.

Opening the meeting the President described the origins of the Old Gaffers Association, starting with the privately organised races on the Solent, run by Messrs Clarke, Rangabe and Richardson from 1958 until 1963.

These races had been started so that each of the three organisers could prove they owned the fastest gaff rigged yacht on the Hamble, but interest in the event had spread and the annual races attracted between 15 and 22 entrants. The President explained how organisation and documentation had, if anything, declined over the years until in 1963 the East Coast Old Gaffers Race was run for the first time, and the Association founded by the organisers of the two events.

Describing owners of gaffers as "piratical individualists", the President stressed the difficulties of organising and regimenting a widely scattered Association of such individualists, and pointed out that our races are now large events attracting a great deal of interest, and to protect ourselves we must have a certain amount of organisation, and the races must be run in accordance with rules and as efficiently as possible.

The President explained the present structure of the Association, with an annual meeting in London at which major policy decisions can be taken, and "legs" in each area where the Association is active, each leg with its own committee and locally elected officers.

Following the President's address, the Hon. Secretary's report (draft following) was read and accepted, and the Hon. Treasurer's report was read by the President as illness enforced the Treasurer's absence from the meeting. In discussion on financial affairs, it was agreed that the question of obtaining insurance cover for third party risks for the Association, and cover of trophies etc. should be investigated and a suitable policy taken out, up to a limit of £15 premium.

It was agreed that for audit purposes the new duplicator should be written off at a discount rate of 20%, and it was pointed out that we most certainly did not anticipate having to purchase a new machine in five years time.

It was agreed that audited accounts should be published each year, and Mr. J. B. Pot kindly offered the services of his firm's auditors, which offer was accepted with thanks.

The question of rallies was discussed next. Some members thought there should be one major official rally each year, with no clashing events in other areas, whilst others favoured the arrangement of one official rally, at a venue convenient to one active area, and "visits" arranged for other active areas on the same date, which could be expected to be a bank holiday weekend. In support of the idea of holding one major official rally, whether supported by "visits" or not, rather than allowing each area to arrange rallies independently, it was pointed out that we would be able to obtain far better publicity with greater chances of increasing our membership if it was announced that the Association, as an Association, was visiting the port or country concerned.

It was suggested that members in areas remote from the chosen rally venue could possibly crew for members in the area for whose particular benefit the rally was arranged. The Secretary pointed out that such an arrangement between members in the East Coast and Solent areas could mean that in alternate years owners could enjoy (?) a prolonged fitting out session without having to rush to get their boats in commission in time for the rally. The Secretary also said that it had always been his hope that members unable to enter their own boats in an "away" area race would arrange to crew for members in the area concerned on race day, and offered to arrange suitable introductions for any members interested.

After considerable discussion, the question of "One Rally" or "Rally and Visits" was put to the vote, with a majority in favour of a rally with "visits" for members in areas remote from the rally venue.

The possibility of a rally at Dover was suggested, as being a venue suitable for both East Coast and Solent Areas, and it was agreed that this idea should be pursued with a view to possible implementation in 1968.

Apologies for absence were given from Alec Rangabe and Michael Millar, and the meeting closed with thanks to the R.N.V.R. Club for entertaining us, and to the President for conducting the meeting.

SECRETARY'S REPORT. After three years as an Association, this is probably a good time to pause and see how well we are achieving our objects.

When the Association was formed, we had three main objects:- Firstly to ensure the successful continuity of the East Coast and Solent Races; secondly to compile as full and complete a record as possible of "Old Gaffers" whilst they are still in use; and thirdly to gather together and help in every possible way those interested in gaff rig.

On our first object, the races appear to be in no danger of vanishing, but helpers on the day are still too few. Now I do not intend to mention by name all those who have helped the Association, but I can not mention work on race days without also mentioning Kate and Alec Rangabe, who annually burn the midnight electricity to ensure that all is in order for the Solent Race.

The second objective has been nibbled at by the "Catalogue of Gaffers" in the Newsletters and the descriptions of boats in the race programmes, but there is still a lot more to be done. It is hoped to have a "technical boat register" started this winter, and I would appeal to all members to co-operate on this exercise.

Not only will the new register form a most valuable collection of historic data, it will enable us to offer a far better service to members re-conditioning old boats and building replicas - part of our third objective. Under this heading also comes the list of recommended boatyards, and our rallies and social functions. Since we are an Association of members, the help we can give to members depends on how willing our more experienced members are to assist, and so far we have been very fortunate, and assistance has been freely given whenever asked.

To turn to the past year's activities - our sailing events have been described in the Newsletters, so I will be brief. The year started well with the successful rally at Le Havre, and went on to see record entries in both area races. The Solent Area Rally at the Folly Inn closed the sailing season, after which both East Coast and Solent Areas enjoyed successful parties ashore, by courtesy of friendly local clubs.

On the subject of races; although their future seems assured, we may have to expect some changes. The East Coast event has had to arrange a starting line further down the estuary, as this year's collision showed the dangers of racing a fleet of nearly fifty boats into a bottleneck. Fortunately, Stone Sailing Club, the leading racing club on the river, have kindly agreed to start our race for us on their line.

With the larger fleets, some tightening of rules must also be expected, and in particular, all members are asked to see their boats can be clearly identified. The Seamanship Cup in the East Coast Race will be awarded only to boats whose name is clearly displayed, and I feel sure it is only a question of time before the same applies to all prizes.

The R.Y.A. have made appeals on the subject of identification, and we can only repeat those appeals and urge all members to see their boats carry their names clearly displayed on both sides. If sufficient owners continue to sail unidentifiable boats there is a very strong possibility of government action - surely something to be avoided at all costs.

On the domestic side this year has seen a continued rise in membership. We started in 1963 with 62 members; roughly doubled this figure in 1964, and we now have about 250 members; - roughly 130 in the East Coast Area; 80 in the Solent Area, and the remainder in the South West, North West, North East, and abroad - as far away as Fiji and New Zealand.

The past year has been one of crises. We started with the near disintegration of my typewriter, and no sooner had we got that problem solved than we were faced with an even more serious matter when the cost of duplicating was raised by a mere 87½%. This meant either an increase in subscriptions; a drastic cut in our Newsletters, or the elimination of labour charges on duplicating. All committee members were immediately circularised, and a decision asked for by September, when the next Newsletter would be due out.

I had made some enquiries as to the cost of a duplicator, and it appeared that we could afford to buy one. The whole affair was precipitated in late September when the local Roneo representative was transferred to another branch, leaving him with a month to complete as much business as possible. He had already offered us a very favourable discount - a figure we would be unlikely to obtain from his successor; and to try and get us to complete a deal, he offered to include a second cylinder for colour printing, raising the effective discount to well over £30. All committee members were contacted, and asked if they objected to immediate purchase of the machine. Only one member was against, and one dubious, so the machine was bought.

The Treasurer's report will give a better idea of the financial situation, but very briefly; with the savings made by duplicating the last two Newsletters on the new machine, profits on the sale of ties and badges, a careful watch on miscellaneous spending, and a transfer of East Coast Race profits, we have bought a duplicator with a market price of £132 without even having to dig into the "typewriter fund".

At the beginning of the year there was talk of raising loans or doubling the subscriptions to enable us to get through the year. I think the fact that we were able to lay our hands on nearly £100 in this emergency without having raised the Subscription and without borrowing indicates the rightness of the decisions taken last year. Now we should be able to continue and even increase our services to members and hold the Subscription at ten shillings for a good many years.

The new typewriter has not yet been bought, but as the estimates for 1967 show, it can be ours before the next Newsletter is due out.

Stocks of ties and badges were bought during the year, and both now show a profit. We issued the now usual five Newsletters during the year, one illustrated, and here I must thank all who contributed, and remind all of you that the continued success of the Newsletters depends on the contributions sent in by members.

Finally, what of the future? Overseas interest is growing, and it looks as if we can become truly a world wide organisation. Membership in areas like the South West is rising slowly but steadily and it should soon be possible to think of a third annual race in the South Western Area, with possibly the Mersea and Dee area following.

So far, our overall policy would appear to have been successful, and there would appear to be no reason why we should not continue to expand with even greater success.

I can not mention by name all those who have helped to achieve our successes so far, but I can take this opportunity to thank them most sincerely on behalf of all members.

J. A. S.

TREASURER'S REPORT The end of 1966 finds the Association with no financial worries whatever; and as far as I can see there is no reason why we ever should have any such worries. The reason is obvious enough - the membership ten shillings subscription pays for the production and circulation of the news letter and all our other activities pay for themselves, or better still show a small profit. It is obvious that if funds were tight we have only to reduce the size of the news letter and we have "trimmed the boat". However, so far from having to jettison flotsam (or do you jettison jetsam?) we are beginning to accumulate ballast to a quite useful extent. We now own about a hundred pounds worth of duplicator and over ten pounds worth of stationery is in stock and paid for. We also have in hand approximately £80 in cash. So in the very few years of our existence we have accumulated £200 worth of useful assets. I would like to emphasise that unlike many treasurers I am always in favour of spending money. In itself, money is an utterly useless commodity and a rotten investment. Any fool can hoard money - to spend it intelligently is rather more difficult - we intend to celebrate the New Year with the purchase of a typewriter!

To summarise the basic facts of our affairs, in 1966 our subscription revenue was £120 as against £88 a year previously. Donations to the Office Equipment Fund amounted to £73. The turnover from sale of badges and ties was slightly over £70 on which the profit was £17. (The previous year the turnover was only £12 and profit about £2 10s.) The cost of producing the newsletter was approximately £40 and of distributing it £15. The actual cost of running the Association, chiefly postage and a little stationery is approximately £20. In addition the East Coast Race showed a very healthy profit - this I don't regard as a "good thing" because I feel that members' entry fees should be used in providing better facilities - especially a launch service at the finish. £25 has been transferred from the East Coast Race Account to the Central Funds - at the time of transfer this item was regarded as a loan in order to permit the duplicator to be purchased immediately. It is noteworthy that this year's news letters have been produced for about £20 less than the previous years, despite a larger mailing list - this shows the start of economies to be expected from the use of our own equipment.

I must apologise for not being present to answer any questions that members might have. I seem to have suffered some minor damage to the keel - "hogged" I think the "doc" said. But if any member wishes to raise any point about our finances please don't hesitate to write. I would do my best to elucidate.

T. E. Cook.

FURTHER NEWS FROM SIRIUS in the CARIBBEAN

In a very few weeks now we will have finished "Privateer", saved the necessary loot, and be free! free! free! The only sailing we've done in the time that we've been here has been week-end stuff, and two trips to Martinique. The first trip was a long week-end pleasure trip when we were suffering from the old yachtsman's disease of advanced poverty, and we couldn't make the most of the "more French than France" spirit of Fort-de-France, Martinique. However, we met an English couple on their yacht "Kingcup", who introduced us to Martiniquan rum. Never again! The second trip to Martinique was spent up on Grants slip stopping the worms from getting at the good old "Sirius". It was surprisingly cheap, only £17 for a week, which included everything except materials.

After a period of shipwrighting on different boats, punctuated by week-end sailing, we prepared for a rapid sail up to the Bahamas, where we intended to make a small fortune. The new owner of a very rum (!) down staysail schooner, "Privateer" managed to stop us with his cheque book and here we've stayed. Still, as I said, we've nearly finished.

During our week-end sails we've managed to visit most bays on the West coast of this island, and it has enabled us to remember how all the ropes go! We found Soufriere to be the most beautiful (and difficult) anchorage. At the mouth of the harbour, the famous Pitons rise 2,400 feet sheer out of a calm sea, and the town anchorage is so steep too, the drill is to put out a stern anchor and tie the bow to a coconut tree!

The film Dr. Doolittle has just been completed at Marigot harbour. We sailed down there a couple of week-ends ago and toured the film set. It was fascinating to see artificial dahlias growing in the swamp and red rosy plastic apples growing on the Calabash trees!

Certainly the most fascinating aspect of our stay here has been the variety of people we have met. Not only charter and pleasure yacht people, but the "locals" too. Some of their ideas and expressions wrap us up. According to them "de yankees can't win the war in Vietnam as dey eat too much food, man, and dey get fat! Send in de Englishman, he can go two weeks on a pint of lime-juice, man!" "You got de camera, take pictures, why you not marry de princess?" When it rains they can't work, because "de rain is falling, man!" When the sun shines you can't expect them to work "out in de hot sun, man!" The local language is patois which seems to be made up of African, Spanish and French. English is a secondary language and when we buy from the country women who come into town on a Saturday, we often find that they cannot speak English at all, and even now cannot add up in cents, only in pence. Which is very confusing. The teachers have a hard job here, as they teach in English, yet the pupils talk in patois out of school and at home. It's a big handicap, as often we are told in the shop "it finish" when we ask for something, because in actual fact they don't know what the heck we're asking for!

Of the yachtspeople, we have become very friendly with Alistair and Beth Robertson. A haggis and a New Zealander on their 26 foot wee boatie "Kyrenia", who have sailed from Scotland and are on their way to New Zealand. Also here is a German architect called Klaus...? it rhymes with louse, but he

isn't! He built his boat (Gaffer, of course) on the beach at Bequia, about 60 miles south of here. Every beam and frame were carved by himself although he had never used carpentry tools before, and he never once used an electric tool. Consequently she is extremely strong and well designed. He didn't have a choice of name. The locals viewed the rotund frame-work on the beach and started to call it PLUMBELLY, so Plumbelly it is!

Anne and Batchie Carr on Havruen III have been very nice to us. They fed us, boozed us, water ski'd us, and lifted out Privateer's foremast for us, using their standing gaff as a derrick. What a beautiful boat Havruen III is. They both put us to shame with the amount of work they do.

Another very nice couple that we met here are Roy and Christiane Stuart with their two daughters Troy and Tania. They first came out here four years ago on a 28 ft. gaff cutter "Silver Seal" from Chichester. Does anyone know her? They had to sell "Silver Seal" when they realised Troy was on the way. Now, after four years of designing and building houses, they have enough to buy a bigger boat and start all over again.

As for us. Well, we shall soon be on our way down to the Grenadines and then on up to Nassau to visit the Griffins on "Northern Light". Pete and sister Kath are returning to England and their house in March, after which we intend to play it by ear! Looking forward to reading another of your news letters.

Steve and Sue Keefe.

LAUNCH OF A GAFFER

After many weeks of delay and frustration - due to the complications of registration and the "efficiency" of the G.P.O., the delivery date for "Kernyas" - Blackwater Sloop 299, and newest of new gaffers - was fixed. The lorry from Maldon was due to arrive at Bursledon at 11.30, and a mobile crane to offload at 11.45, this to coincide with first H.W. I had arranged to borrow a heavy yard dinghy, powered by my own "100+" to tow her back up to my moorings and Gerry Hann had volunteered to help; operations to begin at 10.30.

At 07.45, the yard owner bumped alongside my houseboat with the news that "Kernyas" had arrived! The lorry-driver had decided on an early start and was not exactly pleased by the prospect of a 4-hour wait, but he had to concede that, even if the crane had been available, the water was not, and there was nothing we could do to accelerate lunar forces.

Meanwhile Gerry and I loaded the dinghy with ropes, fenders etc. and chugged down to the launching-creek up which a strong wind was pushing the spring flood. It was quite a day at Moody's, with eleven boats to be launched on that tide, including three Australian ocean racers, all furbished up for the Admiral's Cup, and manned by Southern Cross - embroidered giants in rude health. Even so, spot on time, my little 2½-tonner was swung aloft and gently deposited in the now-full creek. (I didn't dare look, but Gerry provided photographic records).

The dinghy was lashed alongside, the 'Seagull' started first pull, the clutch was let in - and nothing happened - prop. spring gone! At that moment Moody's dinner-hooter went and everyone vanished for an hour - just as well we have a 2nd H.W. in the Hamble or we should have been up the creek! Lunch helped to calm frayed tempers, and then Moody's big launch appeared to tow us up-river. On a long warp it plucked us smartly away from the wall, just as the cradle bearing one of the aforementioned Australians rumbled down the slipway. The launch cut its engine, the tow-rope slackened, we surged on, out of control, and so did the Aussie. "This" I thought, "is where I get my name in the yachting magazines at last!"

With inches to spare our bowsprit cleared the gleaming topsides, the tow-rope tautened again and the strangely-accented oaths faded astern. Five minutes later we were safely moored up in my yard.

Now, however, came the business of the spars which we had to carry overland. Getting a mast across the main South Coast road on a busy afternoon is quite an experience, especially for the car-drivers, and the boom was not much better. After sorting - and labelling - the bewildering mass of rigging came the ferrying out - 20 foot mast + two crew in a 7 foot pram, and the Hamble ebb starting to run, but we did make it at last. Now for the boom and gaff. "Your houseboat's lying at a funny angle", observes Gerry. "Oh it often does that at low water when the moorings are slack - THINKS! - it's not low water - she's adrift!" And crunching against the boats lower down the trot! Wild scramble out to "Kernyas" for nylon kedge-warp to make a temporary securing - it looks very thin, hope it will hold till slack water! (it did). Thank Heaven for Mrs. Jackson and the Cabin Cafe where strong tea is always available ("In any emergency - first treat yourself for shock!") Revived, we turn to the business of rigging and raising the mast. Yes, I know we labelled everything, but you still need to be something between a spider and an octopus to cope. The mast-raising device works perfectly - proud moment - I devised it! but the whole procedure seems so lengthy and complicated that I have grave doubts if I shall ever have time to actually sail! Well, there she is. Just the little matter of bending on the sails, which shouldn't take more than most of tomorrow if the weather holds. (It didn't). Nearly dark now, so Gerry heads for home (he had told his family this morning that he was "going to give Jack a hand for an hour or so"). For me, flashlamp, anchors and chain to re-moor the houseboat, but even after that I find time to row down to have another look at "Kernyas" in the lights of Bursledon Bridge - mine, all 64/64ths, and, at last, here!

P.S. In practice, I can now get the mast up or down in 3 minutes.

J. Yeatman.

FOR SALE

MAST Solid pine, in good condition. Length 37' 4". Circumference 1' 6" at deck; 1' 4" at crosstrees (25' from heel) 8½" at truck. Can be seen on Medway. Price £20.
D. H. Cavey, 1 Larkfield Road, Sidcup, Kent.

WHITSTABLE OYSTER SMACK - PEMBETH. 47' X 40' X 14' X 6'. Built Aldous in 1911. Pitch pine on oak, Oregon pine decks. Converted 1933 by present owner's father. 6 berths in very large saloon. Lister 15 H.P. diesel. Terylene mainsail, other sails proofed. Topsail cutter rigged. A well loved and cared for family boat - £1,500.
Dr. M. J. S. Coe, 46 Elm Road, Chessington, Surrey.

11 TON CUTTER - ORIETTE. Reg. No. 301,805. 33' 6" X 30' 6" X 9' 10" X 4' 6". Built Crossfields in 1924 on Prawners lines, with raised foredeck to mast; coachroof, with skylight and doghouse. 20 H.P. Albin with electric start, new 1965. Most sails Terylene. 5 bunks and 2 cots. Excellent inventory - present owner selling due to age, so all charts, sailing directions, etc. go with the boat. £2,200 o.n.o. Mortgage available to right buyer. Apply to Secretary for further details.